

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

Fifth Series, }
Volume IV. }

No. 1532. — October 18, 1873.

{ From Beginning,
{ Vol. CXLIX.

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PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY BY
LITTELL & GAY, BOSTON.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.

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"THIS ENLIGHTENED AGE."

A MEDITATION IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

I SAY it to myself—in meekest awe
Of progress, electricity, and steam,
Of this almighty age—this liberal age—
That has no time to breathe, or think, or
dream;

I ask it of myself, with bated breath,
Casting a furtive glance about the hall—
Our fathers, were their times so *very* dark?
Were they benighted heathens after all?

Had they not their Galileo—Newton too—
And men as great, though not a Stephenson?
Had they not passable scholars in fair Greece,
Who traced the paths we deign to walk
upon?

Had they not poets in those dismal days—
Homer and Shakespeare, and a few between?
Had they not rulers in their barbarous states,
Who scattered laws for our wise hands to
glean?

Had they not painters, who knew how to
paint—
Raphael, to take an instance—well as we,
With near four hundred years of light the less?
Is Phidias matched in our great century?

And architects? Sure Egypt and old Rome,
And ruined Athens, tell of fair reputes!
The Pyramids, and temples of the Greeks,
May vie with our town-halls and institutes.

Their marble Venice, with her dappled tints,
Their grey old minsters, strong as chiselled
rocks,
Their Tyrolean castles, lifted high,
May outlast all our brick-and-mortar blocks.

And were there not refinements in those days,
And elegant luxuries of domestic life?
I read the answer in the precious things
Whereof these clustering cabinets are rife.

What can we show so beautiful in art?
What new of ours can match their wondrous
old—
This fragile porcelain—this Venetian glass—
This delicate necklace of Etruscan gold?

And was there not religion, when the Church
Was one—a common mother—loved and
feared?
When haughty souls rejoiced 'to bear her
yoke—
When all those grand monastic piles were
reared?

And were there not some preachers—Chrys-
ostoms,
Whose golden words still linger, like a
chime
Of falling echoes in lone Alpine glens,
Amongst the sonorous voices of our time?

And soldiers—heroes? Do we shame them
much?

Have men more courage than in days of
yore?

Are they more jealous for their manhood
now—

Do they respect and honour women more?

Are they more noble than those good old
knights,

Who scorned to strike a foe, save in the
face—

Who reckoned gold as dross to gallant deeds,
And counted death far happier than dis-
grace?

Is life more grand with us, who bask at ease,
And count that only excellent which pays,
Than 'twas to the stout hearts that wore the
steel

In those dark, turbulent, fearless, fighting
days?

O nineteenth century! God has given you
light;

The morning has been spreading—that is
all.

O liberal age! stoop your conceited head,
And gather up the crumbs that they let fall.
Good Words. ADA CAMBRIDGE.

HYMN.

TAKE the praise we bring Thee, Lord,
Something more than what we speak,
For the love within us feels
Words uncertain, cold, and weak.
Thoughts that rise and tears that fall,
Praise Thee better: Take them all!

Looking back the way we've come,
What a sight, O Lord, we see!
All the failure in ourselves,
All the love and strength in Thee.
Yet it seemed so dark before,
Would that we had trusted more!

We will shun no future storm,
Sure Thy voice is in its wind;
We'll confront each coming cloud,
Sure the sun is bright behind:
Praying then, or praising now,
Only wilt Thou teach us how!

Use us for Thy glory, Lord,
In the way that seemeth right,
Whether but to wait and watch,
Or to gird our limbs and fight.
Marching on, or standing still,
Each is best, when 'tis Thy will.

When at last the end shall come,
What, O Lord, is Death but this,
Door of our dear Father's home,
Entrance into perfect bliss,
Peril past, and labour done,
Sorrow over, peace begun!

From The Quarterly Review.

THE STATE OF ENGLISH POETRY.*

THE condition of poetry is a matter of public concern. Above the other arts, poetry stands pre-eminent in its power to influence the mind of society; for while, like the rest of them, it seeks to give an outward form to the inner experience of our nature, it expresses itself not in marble, colour, or sound, but in language, which, of all means for communicating human thought and feeling, is the most rationally intelligible. No more subtle power can be conceived for the direction of those feelings and perceptions which we call taste, whether it invigorate them, by giving a living body to manly thought, or corrupt them, by throwing the lustre of fancy over objects that are by nature debasing and unsound. The poetry of an age is the monument of its character; the virtues and the weaknesses of our ancestors are perpetuated in their verse; and in the same manner we shall ourselves be exposed to the clear judgment of posterity. Over language also the poets exercise a great modifying power, and as they have strengthened it in its infancy, and directed its growth, so in its maturity it should be their endeavour to preserve it from decay.

For all these reasons it is of importance that society should have a settled opinion of what poetry ought to be, and that the critic should not content himself with simply appreciating the intention of a poem, but should determine whether the motive of its composition be just and the language pure. Half a century ago, when the taste of society was fixed by a fairly definite standard, the general principles from which a critic started were commonly understood. But in the present day we have no such agreement of opinion. Modern poetry is certainly not wanting in character; it displays strong and well-defined tendencies of thought and language, which cannot fail to exercise a powerful effect for good or ill upon the public taste. Unfortunately these characteristics are of a kind to ex-

cite the most opposite feelings; and while one party hails them as the dawn of a new era in poetry, another regards them as the mere trickery of charlatans. Both sides are equally positive; neither seeks to refer the decision to principles beyond their own private taste. For instance, the critic, whose book we have placed at the head of our article, embraces with ardour the cause of the modern poets. It is enough for him that they exist, and are men of marked genius; he does not venture to define their prerogative. "By close holding to real" (that is, modern) "poetry," he makes himself master of its peculiarities; and then, by aid of what he calls "the logic of admiration," invents principles to explain them. It is plain that, with such preliminaries, argument is out of the question, in the event of a difference of opinion. If, for example, it is objected to a poem that it is unintelligible, the retort from a person of Mr. Forman's persuasion immediately is, "I understand and admire; you do not understand." The question thus becomes purely personal; hard names are called on each side, and the most violent animosities are of course excited. Fervid panegyric is met by flat contempt, while the basest motives are imputed to explain an adverse opinion on a poem, even when the criticism is delivered with strict moderation. This state of things is in every way mischievous. So far from invigorating taste, it produces nothing but anarchy and scepticism. Now for ourselves we do not pretend to be able to judge with perfect coolness of anything so intimately connected with our own feelings as modern poetry. We have decided opinions on this subject, and we shall do our best to defend them. Wherever the practice of our living poets seems to us prejudicial to the healthiness of taste and the purity of language, we shall not be deterred by genius or reputation from condemning it in the plainest terms, more especially in the case of anything that strikes us as literary imposture. But we shall examine the subject by principles which we shall endeavour to make as plain as possible, and which, whether true or false, have at

* *Our Living Poets.* By H. Buxton Forman. London, 1872.

least the advantage of placing the controversy in a position which is open to argument.

Poetry is the art of producing pleasure for the imagination, the reason, and the feelings, by means of metrical language. The faculties to which the poet appeals are of common constitution. Language, the material of his art, is the common vehicle of thought for his reader as well as for himself. All sound and enduring poetry must therefore be able to submit to the test of four canons relating to conception and expression :—

(1) It must be representative ; that is, it must deal with intelligible subjects in a manner that can be commonly understood.

(2) The subject selected for representation must be suitable to verse.

(3) The form of poetry employed must be such as to represent the true nature of the subject.

(4) The language must be of a kind to heighten and vivify the thought without attracting undue attention to itself.

By these principles every surviving poem may be examined, and, so far as it satisfies the test, it will continue to afford men pleasure, so long as they care to read. Nor, unless he is prepared to maintain that the constitution of the human mind has altered, and poetry is therefore bound to seek out a new track, can any critic claim for a modern poet exemption from the general law. We shall therefore endeavour, in a rapid survey, to consider the principles of contemporary poetry by means of the test which we have proposed.

Such a survey is rendered comparatively easy by the tendency of our modern poets to separate themselves into certain well-defined groups. The names, for instance, of Mr. Tennyson, Mr. Browning, Mr. Swinburne, at once suggest particular subjects of poetry, as well as particular manners of writing, each differing alike from the other, and from the forms of expression in general use. Round each of these master-poets, again, a number of imitators have grouped themselves, so that the entire surface of modern poetry

is broken up into a variety of styles, distinguished by technical differences, almost as marked as those which separated the schools of painting in Italy. In the eyes of Mr. Forman, these divisions appear a sign of richness and vigour, and he tells us that the prospects of English poetry are mainly dependent on the existence of three "schools," which he calls "the Idyllic," "the Psychological," "the Pre-raphaelite." We leave these marvellous names to speak for themselves ; the grouping which they denote we follow as a classification convenient for a review of the subject.

By far the most popular form of modern poetry is the Idyll, for, unlike the generality of contemporary poems, it treats of subjects which are readily appreciated by the public mind. The idyll is a short poem containing a picture of life, and the subjects chiefly selected for representation in the present day are of two classes, the modern and the romantic. Now, with regard to the former, the poet who treats of contemporary themes has, at the outset, to face a considerable difficulty. Poetry will not tolerate anything trite or mean, yet from its very familiarity the ordinary aspect of life presents little to excite the imagination. There have doubtless been idyllic poets peculiarly fortunate in their outward circumstances. The name which at once occurs as that of the great representative of this kind of composition is Theocritus. The Sicilian poet found his subjects ready-made. Everything in his verse is purely representative. The out-of-door pastoral images of his idylls, goats and cattle, corn, honey, and wine, shepherds and fishermen, rustic humour and bucolic love, however refined of their rudeness to suit polite taste, are peculiar to a dry, fertile, and sunny climate, and are even now suggested to the fancy by the shores of the Mediterranean. Theocritus spoke with the voice of Nature. But his literary imitators, even Virgil himself, have not been equally happy ; and in England every poet, who has tried to play on the Doric pipe, has sounded a false note. There is nothing in our damp island atmosphere, or in our own character, to favour that easy, contented,

grasshopper life which still marks the peoples of the South.

England has, however, a rustic poetry of its own, which has been expressed by one who deserves far more admiration from his countrymen than in the present day he is likely to obtain. It is but seldom we hear any mention of the name of Crabbe, yet it was once familiar to every reader of taste and reflection. Born in a low station, and familiar with every form of humble English life, in town and country, this true poet has not hesitated to represent its sordidness and its vices, together with its humours and its virtues. His style, though full of native strength, is entirely without grace or ornament. He is often careless, frequently prosaic, and sometimes even offensively mean. These are grave defects, but they are balanced by greater virtues. Crabbe's genius did not love the level because it was unable to rise, and when the occasion requires he lifts his subject into greatness by his astonishing delineation of those passions whose effects are the same in all conditions of life. He can pass from homely shrewdness to heights of tragedy; he seems to have been acquainted with every motive, and to have fathomed the deepest affections of the heart. We know of no writer who, with such apparently common materials, can exercise such power over the feelings; and if we were required to name the most tragic English poem outside the drama, we should at once name "Resentment."

The modern idyll of rustic life which approaches most closely to Crabbe in the great virtue of truthfulness is "Enoch Arden." The characters in this poem are natural, the incidents are stirring, the story is told very pathetically, and for the most part without affectation. Throughout it, in spite of the different styles of the two poems, we are reminded of Crabbe's "Parting Hour." Mr. Tennyson is superior to Crabbe in the dramatic construction of his tale; he is inferior to him in power, and in knowledge of character. Again, in the "Northern Farmer" and "The Grandmother," Mr. Tennyson has caught with great felicity, and has embodied in admirably representative verse,

natural traits of English humour and feeling.

There is, however, in modern idyllic poetry a wide-spread tendency to emulate the manner of Theocritus, and to reflect the mere surface of English society. "The aim of the idyllic school," Mr. Forster tells us, "is to make *exquisite narrative pictures* of our middle-class life." Now a Dutch painting may, doubtless, be valuable as a work of art. But it is plain that poems composed on the principle described above will, if they are really representative, deal with subjects which are unsuitable for verse. There is nothing to excite the imagination in the well-fed, humdrum, respectable existence of the English middle classes. When, therefore, Miss Ingelow, to take for instance one of the most popular contemporary poets, describes the conversation which took place at a supper in a mill, or at afternoon tea in a country parsonage, she is attempting to make that poetical which is by nature prosaic. Attempts of this kind infallibly lead to misrepresentation. The associations of our landscape have a powerful influence on our imagination, and the poet, in describing external nature, is tempted to people it with inhabitants, not such as we actually find there, but such as seem best to harmonize with the delightful ideas which the scenery excites. Thus when, after the beautiful description of the cathedral town in "The Gardener's Daughter" — a description in which the fidelity of the landscape painter is joined to the skill of a great master of words — we are introduced to the subject of the poem, we find her a nymph no more like life than one of the shepherdesses, in those "mechanic echoes of the Mantuan line," which used to entertain the court ladies in the last century. The episode is described as one of real life. A gardener's daughter should, therefore, be represented as what she is, honest bucolic flesh and blood, especially as she is known occasionally to condescend to

fruits and cream,
Served in the weeping elm.

But as it is, she is evidently an idea arising

ing out of the poet's contemplation of the town, with its low-lying meadows, its grazing cattle, and its chiming clocks. This is the representation of a painter, not of a poet. The imagination is directed to the external form, rather than to the human life that lies beneath.

Much in the same spirit Miss Ingelow represents a discontented "scholar" taking a morning walk in the country, and feeling himself out of tune with the beauties of nature. The sound of running streams, the green of the leaves, the singing of the birds, and the movements of the wild animals, are all described with much grace and amiability. As the climax and epitome of these natural beauties, the scholar at last lights on a melodiously moral carpenter, who, after rehearsing a chapter of his own biography, advises him

to wage no useless strife

With feelings blithe and debonair.

We venture to say there is nothing in the bucolics of the last century more unlike nature than this; yet a thousand kindred instances might be quoted to exemplify the spread of a new phase of Arcadianism, which appears to us far more disastrous, in its effects upon taste, than the pastoral affectations of earlier times. No sane person ever supposed the Strephons and Dellas of Pope to resemble nature. But the exaltation of common objects into a position which they have no right to occupy is actually mischievous, because, under the fidelity with which the poet paints external circumstances, he disguises a misrepresentation of human life. We turn with relief from the sickly pastoralism of "The Titianic Flora" to that true and manly genius which cares not to look for "the exquisite" where it knows it will never be found, but which discovers real poetry under the sordid crust of life, and beneath the mean names of "Roger Cuff," and "Peter Grimes."

Precisely the same tendency to reduce the representation of poetry to that of painting is visible in our idylls professedly dealing with romantic themes. We are far from desiring to confine the imagination of the poet to contemporary subjects. Let him, if he can, tell us of knights, dragons, anthropophagi, and men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders; all we demand of him is, that he make us believe for the while in the truth of his fictions. The true poet is he who can make the most of the means which the general state of fancy and belief affords.

'Tis he can give my heart a thousand pains,
Can make me feel the passion that he feigns.
Enrage, compose, with more than magic art,
With pity and with terror rend my heart,
And snatch me through the earth or in the air,
To Thebes or Athens, when he will and where.

A poet of this sort may use the utmost liberty with his readers. It matters little to us that Shakespeare's Romans speak with an unmistakable English accent; it is enough that they are true men. Scott's moss-troopers may not, perhaps, be acceptable to the historian, but so faithful are they to nature, and to the general spirit of rude times, that we gladly surrender our imagination to the guidance of the poet. But a purely fanciful representation must not offend against our fixed habits of conception. If a poet represent a knight, we require the latter to be a man of those qualities which his name implies,

Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer.

We shall not be satisfied with a philosopher in armour. A painter might of course take a philosopher for his model of a knight, and the spectators would be none the wiser, as a picture presents to us nothing but the outward form. But in the domain of language the union of the two objects produces an inevitable confusion of ideas. When, therefore, in "The Princess," Mr. Tennyson works out the essentially modern problem of the Rights of Women by the help of knightly actors, he misrepresents character and obscures the issue. Except that the ordinary associations with his subject are vulgar, while the knight is a picturesque figure, we see no reason why the tale should be thrown back into bygone times. On the other hand, there are very good reasons why it should not. The story is incredible, for had Ida chartered her university in the extremely masculine times which are supposed, she would have met with very different lovers from a prince apparently born for petticoats, being whisked off in the saddle in front of a De Bracy or a Bois Guilbert, who would have been too rude to understand her logic, and too determined to melt at her prayers. The problem, again, proposed in the poem is left unsolved, for all actual modern difficulties are ignored, and how can we be serious and believing in the midst of a palpable masquerade?

The same result follows in the remarkable cycle of poems, "The Idylls of the King." The actors in these idylls

are knights of romance, figures with which the reader has absolutely no vital associations. It was not, indeed, always so. The fabled paladin was once an object of affection and belief to the majority of readers in Europe. It is related that a Spanish gentleman of the sixteenth century, going out to hunt, left his wife and daughters engaged in reading a romance. When he returned, he found them in tears, and on enquiring the cause of their grief, "Sir," they replied, "Amadis is dead." They had read so far in the story. Such were the images that turned the brain of Don Quixote. Such are the characters who afford the reader so much merriment and melancholy in the bright cantos of Ariosto—heroes who love the fight, the chase, and the banquet, equally well, win enchanted spears, deliver fair ladies from foul monsters, and soar over the whole face of the world on docile hippogriffs. Such, again, are the knights of Mallory, whose "History of King Arthur" forms the basis of "The Idylls of the King." Tedious as Mallory's narrative becomes from its monotonous prolixity, it is full of quaintness, humour, and marvel, and not without touches of greatness. It is, in fact, a fragment of the literary architecture of another age, and that this should fall into the hands of a modern restorer is to our mind as bad as the late painting and gilding of Temple Bar.

But how is the romantic life of an ancient dreamland made interesting to the modern reader? Little change is perceptible in the outward form of the narrative. The various episodes in "The Idylls of the King" are almost all to be found in the original history. But, treated as the select subjects of separate poems, their entire complexion is altered. The wild religious legends of the "History" merely serve to increase the atmosphere of marvel proper to a romantic story; in the general scheme of adventure the incidents of love form but a variation on the feats of arms. Under the romantic surface of the modern poems, on the other hand, the interest lies in questions of the relation between the sexes, in subtleties arising out of the present condition of religious feeling, and in problems connected with morals and politics. Hence, while in Mallory's romance we always feel the air open, sylvan, and free, in "The Idylls of the King" we are continually in the close atmosphere of a secret casuistry resembling that of Euripides. What is prominent in Mallory's

representation of Arthur is his adventures, as lord of a company of knights; what is chiefly of interest to Mr. Tennyson is the state of the king's marriage relations with Guinevere. To the romance-writer this was little; but so much is it to the poet that he does not scruple for his own purpose to alter the original story. A single significant sentence from the "History" will show the gulf between the two representations. When the queen's adultery is discovered, Mallory makes no mention of any meeting between her and Arthur. She is carried off by Lancelot to his castle, an act on which the King comments in the following refreshingly plain speech: "Much more am I sorrier for my good knights' loss than for the loss of my queen, for queens might I have enough, but such a fellowship of good knights shall never be together in no company." Merlin, again, in the original, with his frequent disappearances and his strange disguises, makes an imposing and romantic figure, nor do we see any reason for transmuting him into an aged casuist, who surrenders the secret of his power out of complaisance to the blandishments of a courtesan.

All this poetical alchemy has its inevitable effect upon the character of the Arthurian cycle of poems. Throughout "The Idylls of the King" a double motive seems to have been operating in the mind of the poet, and the result is a violation of Horace's excellent rule, "sit quidvis simplex duntaxat et unum." The part of these poems which impresses the imagination is the external form. In all his pictures of the knight, his armour, his horse, the romantic scenery through which he rides, and the Gothic halls in which he feasts, Mr. Tennyson as usual displays the genius of a great painter. But the inner life, the human interest, whatever in the idylls appeals to our intellect and our feelings, comes, as we have said, from questions that are purely modern. We do not say that these questions cannot be treated in poetry; we only maintain that to associate them with the life of a rude age produces the same effect as to combine "a human head, a horse's neck, a woman's body, and a fish's tail." "King Arthur is a modern gentleman." Possibly, but at any rate he is not the least in the world like our conception of a true knight. Equally remote is the true knight, the offspring of romantic honour and personal prowess, from the ordinary representative of the

"modern gentleman," whose wildest deeds of daring are done on the Stock Exchange, and whose most deadly quarrels are settled in the Queen's Bench. The ideas associated with the two states of society are incompatible; allegory is therefore out of the question, and the romantic idyll is open to the charge which we have brought against the pastoral idyll, of misrepresenting the true nature of its subject.

The principles of conception followed by our modern idyllic poets have had a remarkable and interesting influence on their style. As it is their aim to impress the mind by the representation rather of external forms than of human nature, they not unnaturally employ language much in the same way as a painter employs colour. The true use of language is clearly to convey thought, and the poet should therefore use it to express in the plainest and noblest manner the conception of his mind. Words however have, by their mere sound, a subtle influence upon the imagination. The word "forlorn," which appeared so full of meaning to Keats, the word "nevermore," which suggested to Edgar Poe the poem of "The Raven," both exemplify the results that can be produced by that purely sensuous side of poetry which is related to music. Nothing is more remarkable in modern English poetry than those curiosities of language, and novelties of metre, which attest the progress of this principle of composition. We doubt whether any poet has ever so thoroughly comprehended the value of words in metrical writing as Mr. Tennyson. His earliest poems, such as "Mariana," "Recollections of the Arabian Nights," "The Lotos Eaters," "The Palace of Art," and many others, are excellent examples of "word-painting" in poetry. They resemble cabinet pictures full of delicacy, feeling, and finish. The pleasure which they afford arises from the distinctness of form, and the glow of colour, with which remote objects are brought before the imagination. The required effect is produced, partly because the subjects of these poems are small, partly because they are purely fanciful. Habit has, however, grown upon Mr. Tennyson, and has led him to introduce the same principle into subjects of larger range, while in themes dealing with human life and passion he often, as we have shown, selects his subject, not so much with a view to its inherent elements of poetry, as to the capacity it

possesses of taking a picturesque form and colour. Whatever the nature of his theme, he determines to raise it by mere distinction of style, and he therefore frequently makes the most familiar objects pass through a coloured medium of language, which gives them a perfectly novel appearance to the general mind.

In this purpose Mr. Tennyson has been greatly aided by his powers of metrical construction. He can compel the stubborn English into the most ingenious imitation of the quantitative classical metres. He has reproduced the trochaic in its classical form, and he was the first to make that familiar use of the anapæst which has since been so much extended by Mr. Swinburne. We should be the last to depreciate these great accomplishments. But it is impossible not to perceive that, in the exercise of his technical skill, Mr. Tennyson constantly violates the old and sound principle that art lies in concealing art. His style is frequently too good for his subject. Nowhere is this fault more apparent than in a poem which is in many respects the most remarkable that its author has produced; we allude to "Maud." The versification in this piece is admirable, and were "Maud" nothing but the study of a madman or a hypochondriac in love, it would be impossible, whatever we might think of the selection of the subject, to deny the propriety of the anapæst as a representative measure. Though they are not exactly objects which we expect to find in lyric verse, we might even admire the skill with which the burglar's tool, the adulterator of food, and the linendraper's drudge, are made to assume colossal proportions in a distempered brain. But by a flagrant defect of judgment, and a curious deficiency of humour, the morbid and querulous recluse, with whom, as the speaker throughout the poem, we are evidently intended to sympathize, is made to be the critic of a national policy. We shall not be suspected of being in the pay of Manchester, but we confess that, when we come to the vigorous anapæsts in which the recluse denounces those terrible curses of peace, "the grind of the villainous centrebit," the wretch who "pestles his poisoned poison," and above all "the smooth-faced, snub-nosed rogue," with his "cheating yard-wand," we are afflicted with an intolerable desire to laugh. The reason is plain, for the elevation of trivial objects into heroic importance is the very essence of burlesque.

It is, however, with blank verse, as the metre in which almost all modern idylls are written, that we desire particularly to deal. And by way of premise we take it for granted, in spite of all that metaphysicians may say as to the essence of poetry, and in spite of all such loose phrases as "prose-poetry," that the vehicle of poetry, and that which distinguishes it from prose-writing, is metre. The basis of ancient metre was quantity; that of modern metre is accent and rhyme. Rhyme may be the product of barbarism, yet it seems at any rate to be the method by which, in all European countries, the ear is most capable of deriving pleasure. Of the rhymed measures of England the national metre *par excellence* is the heroic couplet. Blank verse in its original is merely this measure with the rhyme cut off. As used by its inventor, Surrey, it differs from prose only in the accentuation, and the syllabic division of the lines, and so far it is a process of decomposition. It is clearly the best vehicle of expression for the stage, where the actors ought to speak in the manner most like life that is possible in metre. It possesses again an advantage over the couplet in its greater liberty. It would, for instance, be impossible to conceive of a subject, with the vastness and sublimity of "Paradise Lost," fitly expressed in metre where the periods are always checked, and often terminated, at the end of the second line. On the other hand there are few themes which could bear the mingled grandeur, complexity, and strangeness of Milton's peculiar style. The couplet, by its natural constitution, can be bitter, dignified, humorous, or pathetic, according to the mood which is desired. Blank verse, on the contrary, depends for its effect entirely upon the individual artifice of the poet, and hence the chief danger in employing it is, lest the writer, wishing to separate his style sharply from the region of prose, should fall into mannerism.

Now the blank verse of our time, at any rate as used by the group of poets whom we are discussing, is the creation of Mr. Tennyson. It has entirely superseded the heroic couplet. It has acquired a prestige which may be compared to the influence exercised by the verse of Pope. We cannot open a magazine or a volume of poetry without encountering the well-known manner. We propose, therefore, to select typical passages of blank verse from Mr. Tennyson's poems, to try how far the style conforms to the fourth

canon on which our criticism is based. The first shall be taken from the modern idyll, "Enoch Arden." In this poem the author has justly felt that it is his business to be simple, and simple and even colloquial, he accordingly is. But, in consequence of the absence of rhyme, his style differs imperceptibly from that of a good novelist. The ear discerns (and this is partly by the assistance of the eye) no more than that the story is being told in well-connected periods of a particular accentuation. Take, for instance, the following printed as a paragraph:—

For more than once, in days of difficulty and pressure, had she sold her wares for less than what she gave in buying what she sold. She failed, and saddened knowing it, and so, expectant of a day that never came, gained for her own a scanty sustenance, and lived a life of silent melancholy.

It would be difficult here to recover the "disiecti membra poetæ." The passage is in fact mere prose, and not good prose, for the involved construction in the first two lines merely means that she sold at a loss. But such is the result of that art, which, in a conscious effort to reach extreme simplicity, overshoots itself and falls into mannerism. The most successful passage in the poem appears to us the dramatic climax in which Enoch discovers himself to Miriam Lane:—

Then Enoch, rolling his gray eyes upon her: "Did you know Enoch Arden of this town?" "Know him," she said, "I knew him far away; Held his head high, and cared for no man, he." Slowly and sadly Enoch answered her: "His head is low, and no man cares for him. I am the man."

There is artifice here; but the moment is one of highly wrought expectation, and the artifice serves to heighten the feeling, without attracting attention to itself. This is true art.

In "Aylmer's Field," on the contrary, we are constantly pained by the disproportion between the language and the thought. Is there any lover of vigorous sense and of his native language who is not offended by the gross mannerism of the following representative passage?

He, like an Aylmer in his Aylmerism,
Would care no more for Leolin's walking with
her,
Than for his old Newfoundland's, when they
ran
To loose him at the stables; for he rose
Two-footed at the limit of his chain,
Roaring to make a third; and how should
Love,

Whom the cross-lightnings of four chance-met
eyes
Flash into fury life from nothing, follow
Such dear familiarities of dawn?
Seldom, but when he does, Master of All.

Here is the same thought in Crabbe:—

To either parent not a day appeared
When with this love they might have inter-
fered.
Childish at first, they cared not to restrain,
And strong at last, they saw restriction vain;
Nor knew they how that passion to reprove,
Now idle fondness, now restless love.

These lines are not very memorable;
and they might, we think, have been
better finished. But between the two
passages there appears to us all the dif-
ference that lies between good English
and the most celestial Chinese.

In the romantic idylls there is, of
course, not the same painful discrepancy
between subject and style. But whether
it be the remoteness of the theme, or the
extreme elaboration of the verse, our at-
tention is constantly drawn to the poet's
peculiar manner. The style is so full of
curious and careful selection that, as in
modern architecture, the mind is rather
attracted to the separate details, than to
the general thought which these ought to
express. The language is more distant
than dignified, more choice than pure.
Mr. Tennyson's aim seems to be to make
as sharp a distinction as possible between
his own and the vulgar tongue. Instead
of good English, we seem to be listening
to a translation from the Greek. He de-
lights in the use of obsolete words, which
send the reader to his dictionary, too fre-
quently in vain. Old words may, doubt-
less, obtain a fresh currency after long
disuse, but on what terms?

*Multa renascentur quæ jam cecidere, cadentque
Quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus,
Quem penes arbitrium est et jus et norma
loquendi.*

Again, there is an issue of new coinage
which is not pure. Compound epithets
are modelled after the Greek, or re-
vived from the uncritical Elizabethan era.
Thus, where we should naturally say,
"the bee is cradled in the lily," Mr. Ten-
nyson writes, "the bee is lily-cradled."
When a man's nose is broken at the
bridge, or a lady's turns up at the tip, the
one is said to be "a nose bridge-broken-
er;" and the other (with much gallantry)
to be "tip-tilted, like the petal of a flower."
This is clearly, we think, false

English. We shall hear next of a "knee-
broken horse," or a "head-shock boy."*

The movement of the metre again is
very peculiar. Discarding Milton's long
and complex periods, Mr. Tennyson has
restored blank verse to an apparently
simple rhythm. But this simplicity is in
fact the result of artifice, and, under every
variety of movement, the ear detects the
recurrence of a set type. One of the
poet's favourite devices is to pause on a
monosyllable at the beginning of a line,
and this effect is repeated so often as to
remind the reader of Euripides and his
unhappy "oil-flask" in "The Frogs."
The following instances occur within two
or three pages:—

Sin against Arthur and the Table Round,
And the strange sound of an adulterous race,
Against the iron grating of her cell
Beat.

A sound
As of a silver horn across the hills
Blown.
And then the music faded, and the grail
Passed.
His eyes became so like her own they seemed
Hers.

Artifices like these, no doubt, render
Mr. Tennyson's blank verse striking and
easy of imitation; but we regard them as
fatal to the purity of the language. The
double-distilled exquisiteness of the style
is oppressive to liberty and fresh English
air; its insidious fetters cramp the free
play of English verse. In all that is said
of the masterly workmanship (using the
word in a goldsmith's sense) of modern
blank verse we concur, but where any
longer is

The varying line,
The long majestic march, and energy divine,
which was once thought to be the crown
of our language? We challenge any vo-
tary of the modern muse to produce a
passage of contemporary blank verse
which for nobility, swiftness, and strength
can match the following specimen of the
old heroic style:—

With Palamon, above the rest in place,
Lycurgus came, the surly king of Thrace,
Black was his beard and manly was his face. }
The balls of his broad eyes rolled in his head,

* We take it that an English compound is only ad-
missible when the first of the two words joined qualifies
the second, as "star-bright," "rose-red," "shock-
headed." We should not object to the compound
"lily-cradle;" but in the phrase we have quoted the
second part of the compound is clearly the more im-
portant, as it contains the essential predicate of the
sentence. We might as well say, "The Queen is
feather-bedded," instead of, "The Queen is sleeping in
a feather-bed."

And glared betwix a yellow and a red.
 He looked a lion with a gloomy stare,
 And o'er his eyebrows hung his matted hair.
 Big-boned, and large of limb, with sinews
 strong,
 Broad-shouldered, and his arms were round
 and long.
 Four milk-white bulls, the Thracian use of old,
 Were yoked to draw his car of burnished gold.
 Upright he stood, and bore aloft his shield,
 Conspicuous from afar, and overlooked the
 field.
 His ample forehead bore a coronet,
 With sparkling diamonds and with rubies set.
 His surcoat was a bearskin on his back;
 His hair hung down behind of glossy raven
 black.
 Ten brace and more of greyhounds, snowy
 fair,
 And tall as stags, ran loose and coursed about
 his chair,
 A match for pards in fight, in grappling for
 the bear.

To sum up our indictment against the modern idyll concisely, we find in it an attempt to confound the "representation" of poetry with the "representation" of painting, and, in pursuance of this design, a tendency to treat language, which ought to be the living vehicle of thought, as the mere inanimate material of style.

We turn now to the "school" of writers whom Mr. Forman distinguishes by the terrible name "Psychological." The poetical drama in England has long ceased to flourish. Great actors played, and excellent prose-comedies were written down to a comparatively recent date; but since the development of the stage in the period broadly called Elizabethan, no tragedy has been produced of a higher stamp than "Cato," and no poetical comedy at all. We still however read the productions of that great age with pleasure, and hence poets have fallen into the error of supposing that dramas may be written to be read, which it would be quite impossible to play. The works of these poets, as they are never meant to be seen in action, are almost always either coldly conceived or unnaturally and spasmodically expressed. Hence it is that writers of a more ardent and original genius, perceiving this defect, yet desiring to preserve the dramatic form of expression, have sought to invent some new species of poetry, which, though unfitted for the stage, may still afford pleasure to the reader. The aim of the group of poets headed by Mr. Browning appears to be to represent character apart from action. If vigour, ingenuity, and a determination to overcome difficulties by sheer force of

intellect could achieve this object, Mr. Browning would have been fully successful. It is impossible to speak without respect of such qualities; but it is equally impossible for us not to perceive that Mr. Browning's aim is chimerical, and that by his practice he has helped to confuse the sound popular notions of the nature of poetry. He has not, it is true, obtained entire mastery over the public ear. In the prologue to "The Ring and the Book," he addresses the "British public" as "ye who like me not," in the half-resentful, half-contemptuous tone of one who knows his worth, and finds it unappreciated. At the same time he has that kind of power which subdues critics like Mr. Forman, who are ready to surrender their judgment at the first summons from anything that strikes them as original or profound.

Now, as part of the British public, we are naturally anxious to clear ourselves from the charge of obtuseness which Mr. Browning brings against us. We hold, for our part, that his manner of conceiving character is not poetical, and his manner of expressing his conceptions is not dramatic. And, first, what is his method of conceiving character? We cannot answer this question better than by an extract from Mr. Browning's last work, "Fifine at the Fair," which we take to be a kind of poetical pamphlet, containing the author's views of life and composition. We have no space to consider at length this curious and rambling production, which rather reminds us of the philosopher who constructed a system by following out the natural sequence of his thoughts on a flea. The following, however, is the passage which appears to us to illustrate the poet's mode of estimating character:—

And the delight wherewith I watch this crowd
 must be
 Akin to that which crowns the chemist, when
 he winds
 Thread up and up, till clue be fairly clutched,
 unbinds
 The composite, ties fast the simple to his
 mate,
 And tracing each effect back to its cause, elate,
 Constructs in fancy from the fewest primitives
 The complex and complete, all diverse life that
 lives
 Not only in beast, bird, fish, insect, reptile, but
 The very plants, and earths, and ores. Just so
 I glut
 My hunger both to be, and know the thing I
 am,
 By contrast with the thing I am not; so through
 sham

And outside, I arrive at inmost real, probe,
And prove how the nude form obtained the
chequered robe.

This is a very apt illustration of Mr. Browning's place in poetry. He is a dramatic chemist. He aims at showing the inward realities of character, not its outward effects; his method therefore is not fictitious representation, but mental analysis. We need hardly say this principle exactly reverses the ordinary conception of the dramatic art. "The purpose of playing," says Shakespeare, "both at the first and now, was and is, *to hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature*, to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure." The drama was, according to his view, to deal with fictions representing the experience of life; his characters are therefore always seen in action, and their conduct is judged by those principles of right and wrong which are universally received. Mr. Browning, on the other hand, professes, not to people the fancy with fictitious personages, but to reveal to the reader the actual life of the soul, to which the poet's eye can penetrate, through all "the sham and outside," wherewith custom and society have overlaid it. His characters are all real types, and are presented to us merely for the sake of exhibiting the working of their minds. Thus we are shown the mental processes of a rude savage, a Roman Catholic bishop, or a painter of the middle ages; and, instead of having our fancy enriched with life-like fictions, we are promised for once a peep-show of things as they are.

Now, if Mr. Browning can really do what he says, and if words are to retain their meaning, it is manifest that imagination must be excluded from his method; and he is working in a sphere, not of Poetry, but of Science. But how are these positive results to be achieved, and what is this mystical power of analysis, which enables the poet to reduce the human heart to its first elements, as a chemist resolves water into gas? Not a process of observation, but a mere freak of the fancy.

Fancy with fact is just one fact the more,

says Mr. Browning, explaining to the reader, in the prologue to "The Ring and the Book," how he was enabled to recover all that was said and thought about an action that had fallen out of men's memories for two centuries. Amazing

scepticism, prodigious dogmatism! For this is as much as to say that there is no real fact but in thought, and therefore that whatever Mr. Browning thinks concerning things and persons must be true. With such reasoning it is idle to deal seriously; but, as far as dramatic representation is concerned, we think that on this principle two things are plain. First, Mr. Browning's revelations of character will really begin and end with himself; and, secondly, they will depend for their effect, not on the amount of their truthfulness, but of their paradox.

His "dramatis personæ" are all odd specimens or extinct species: they remind us more of what might be than of what is, more of ideas than of men. Take, for instance, the character of Bishop Blougram. The motives assigned to this speaker are no doubt intelligible in themselves, but it is extremely unlikely that a man of the world would have openly avowed them; the character, in fact, seems rather to have been thought out of a theory than to be a portrait drawn from life. The Bishop is not a representative man. Take, again, the monologue of Fra Lippo Lippi. Vasari, in his gossiping manner, relates several anecdotes of this painter to prove the grossness of his morals. Mr. Browning's object is not to question the accuracy of the biographer's facts, but to give them a new colour. From the instances he quotes, Vasari not unnaturally concludes that Lippi was a man of violent animal passions ("spinto di furore amoroso anzi bestiale"). "A judgment based on 'sham and outside,'" says Mr. Browning; "you must get back to the 'fewest primitives,' and interpret the man's actions by the 'spirit' you find in his works." Accordingly, he plants himself in front of one of Lippi's pictures, and following the advice of Socrates in "The Clouds," he lets his fancy fly out like a cockchafer on a string, and presently comes back with quite a new portrait of the monk, after the manner of the German philosopher who evolved the anatomy of a camel out of his own consciousness. Lippi's moral principles, we are to believe, as well as his artistic style, were based on a robust feeling for material beauty. "For me," says the metaphysical ne'er-do-well, showing the "inmost real" of his character,

For me I think I speak as I am taught;
I always see the Garden, and God there
A-making man's wife; and my lesson learned,

The value and significance of flesh,
I can't unlearn ten minutes afterwards.

This is "taste in morals" with a vengeance. Nor is the confident self-assertion of Lippi's "candid friend" without its influence on certain minds. "It is impossible," says Mr. Forman, "not to feel (*sic*) that the monk's character for which Browning has reached across the centuries, is absolutely true in essentials." So great is the power of paradox! George de Barnwell would doubtless have convinced our critic that his motives in murdering his uncle were perfectly pure. For ourselves, we are quite ready to believe with Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle that the charge against Lippi is at least not proven. But taking Vasari's facts for granted, as Mr. Browning has done, the biographer's rough and ready way of accounting for them is, we believe, far truer to history and human nature than the poet's. In the first place, Lippi's self-conscious estimate of his own principles of composition is a critical anachronism. And, as for his moral stand-point, we take it that a more genuine reflection of mediæval sentiment it would be impossible to find than the *Life of Benvenuto Cellini*. Let any one, then, compare the style of this autobiography with the speech which is put into the mouth of the painter, and he will see how foreign the latter is to the thoughts and feelings of the minds which it is meant to reveal. Delightful and entertaining as is the narrative of Cellini, it is the utterance of a man who had nothing to fear, either from his own conscience or from public opinion, who describes with the same frank artlessness the murder of an enemy and the casting of a statue, and whose mental anxieties in prison seem to have been solely occasioned by the fear of poison in his food. Here speaks the representative Italian of the middle ages. The speech of Lippi, on the other hand, could only have been uttered in an age full of archæology, self-consciousness, and metaphysics—in a word, in the age of Mr. Browning.

It will thus be seen that we consider Mr. Browning's method of conceiving character to be neither poetical nor just. But assuming it to be both, and granting the poet the peculiar powers that are claimed for him, it remains to be seen whether the conception can clothe itself in such a form as to make his characters appear to the reader, what they are styled in the titles of his books,

"*Dramatis Personæ*," and "Men and Women." The invariable form of Mr. Browning's dramatic pieces is monologue. Now the essence of the old drama is action. We are pleased with a play when a number of persons, who appear to resemble nature, work out upon the stage a plot, which seems to follow probability. We are interested to know whether Macbeth will murder his king, Othello kill his wife, or Hamlet avenge his father. The motives of the actors interest us, as the forces which produce the action in which the drama culminates. Hence the regular dramatist with reason makes his play proceed through a progressive series of scenes and acts. But, from Mr. Browning's point of view, the action is only of interest in so far as it suggests the inner thought, and each of his characters accordingly discovers himself to the reader in a monologue. His various poems resemble soliloquies, extracted from dramas, to the earlier acts of which the reader is supposed to have had private access. We are assumed to know that Andrea del Sarto had a bad wife, and that Lippi painted pictures in a particular manner, or, if the speakers are less well known, they are at pains to discover to us their relation to the matter about which they talk. Thus, instead of a perfect whole, which can be easily surveyed from beginning to end, we have an arbitrary imputation of motive, which practically puts our judgment out of court.

Mr. Browning himself seems to have felt that this was a defect, and to have resolved to show in a "magnum opus" that his method was capable of completeness and unity. We will, therefore, examine his principle as shown undoubtedly at best advantage, in his very remarkable poem, "*The Ring and the Book*." The poet has here, with great ingenuity, produced an extraordinary appearance of completeness, by himself telling a story, and then representing the incidents as discussed by a number of speakers, so as to show the various lights in which one action may present itself to different minds. So much does this apparent unity impress Mr. Forman that he exclaims, "The dramatic art has received a distinctly epic magnificence of structure!" "The logic of admiration" has here betrayed our author into nonsense. We know not why the drama should have any need to borrow from the epic, but we do know that the purpose, both of the regular drama and of the epic, is to ex-

hibit an action, and that in "The Ring and the Book" there is no action at all, for the very good reason that the action discussed is completed before the poem begins. The following is the story, which in an old-fashioned drama would be the plot of the play.

Count Guido Franceschini, a poor nobleman of Arezzo, marries Pompilia, the putative daughter of two wealthy Roman citizens, of the middle-class, for the purpose of becoming heir to their property, as well as to repair his present fortunes by Pompilia's dowry. After the marriage the parents, finding that Guido, besides being an extremely disagreeable person, does not stand so well socially as they had been led to believe, disclose the actual truth as to Pompilia's birth in a court of law, and so disappoint the Count of his prospects. Upon this Guido treats his wife with such cruelty that she is at last constrained, in all good faith, to put herself under the protection of a young priest, Giuseppe Caponsacchi, in whose company she flies to Rome. Pausing to rest on the way, the pair are overtaken by the Count, who at first endeavours to obtain a remedy at law. The court, however, take a light view of the matter, send Pompilia into retreat for a twelvemonth, and banish the priest from the territory for the same space. Pompilia leaves her retreat before her term is expired, and joins her parents at a villa near Rome, where she is delivered of a son. Guido hearing of this, tracks her to her refuge, and murders her together with the two old people.

Here, doubtless, are the materials for a tragedy, and had the story fallen into the hands of Webster he might have produced a drama marked with the same gloomy pathos as "The Duchess of Malfi." The innocence of Pompilia and the wickedness of Guido would in such a representation have aroused the pity and terror of the spectators. But these are not the feelings which Mr. Browning is anxious to excite. As we have said, he tells the story of the murder in the prologue, and the body of the poem is intended to represent what was said and thought during the trial. Here, he argues, are facts which were once the talk of Europe; they have fallen into oblivion; the poet's art shall revive them and show, by force of mental analysis, the exact manner in which they impressed contemporary minds. Now, to begin with, this is no business for the poet. The purpose of poetry is to satisfy the

imagination and the feelings. The spectator of a play only cares for a fact, in so far as it is a good basis for fiction; he desires a representation so vivid as to make him believe that his emotions are being excited by the fact itself. But what Mr. Browning is interested in is the actual fact, partly on account of the complication of the incidents, partly on account of its antiquity. From his belief in the fixity of the laws of mind, he feels sure that the action described would have impressed various characters in a particular way, and would have given rise to the same innuendo, debate, and casuistry, in the seventeenth as in the nineteenth century. For each possible point of view from which it could have been regarded he provides a spokesman, and endeavours to persuade us that fancy, aided by archæology, can thus recover the thoughts of persons two centuries dead. Allowing that this feat could be performed, it is plain that the imagination would only be impressed in the same way as at an exhibition of optical illusion, or a spiritualistic "séance." Our admiration would be excited not by the justice and nobility of the thoughts which are uttered, but by the belief that we are listening to the "ipsissima verba" of persons once alive.

Besides, the delight which the poet himself experiences in tracking the intricacies of thought has caused him to overlook the most obvious rules of art, and is the cause of the enormous length of "The Ring and the Book." All the characters are analyzed with the same minuteness. Thus, besides having to listen to the Count, Caponsacchi, and Pompilia, the chief actors in the story, we are obliged to hear, at equal length, the version of one half Rome, who believed Guido; of the other half, who believed his wife; of a certain logical "Tertium Quid," who believed partly in neither, partly in both; of the Count's advocate, of Pompilia's advocate, of her confessor, and finally of the Pope. The same story is, in fact, told ten times over, and a subject which might have been properly extended to five acts is swelled into four volumes. And this, though the question debated is the right of a husband, under certain circumstances, to kill his wife, and though Mr. Browning has himself told us the real merits of the case before the debate begins!

But is the poet's own object attained? Do we really seem to be listening to the "dramatis personæ" of a previous age of existence? In spite of the ingenuity and

real insight which is often displayed in the various monologues, the speakers do not appear to us in the very least to resemble natural men and women. They remind us rather of fossil bones skilfully constructed with human shapes, into which Mr. Browning throws his voice like a ventriloquist. Not one of them speaks, as we imagine the man he is meant for would have spoken under the circumstances. This is partly the fault of the monologue, for there are few positions in society in which one man is allowed to monopolize conversation. Besides, some of the speakers are only in a position to soliloquize, the lawyers not being allowed to plead *viva voce*, and the Pope merely thinking to himself. To such straits is Mr. Browning reduced in this respect, that when he comes to the Fisk, Pompilia's advocate, he represents him as a man so self-conscious as to stand before a glass, and try the effect of his speech when recited aloud. This is surely a wanton misrepresentation of character, for such a piece of vanity would only be natural in the case of one who was really expecting an audience.

But throughout every speech we are always aware of the presence of Mr. Browning. Each speaker (even Pompilia, who cannot read or write) is a master of mental analysis, employs the most grotesque figures of speech, reports every observation that anybody ever made to him verbatim, and wearies his audience with intolerable details. If Mr. Browning had had to tell the story of the Trojan war, he would have begun with Leda's eggs, and would probably have analyzed the shells. Never were speakers so tedious as his. Does the Roman gossip mention the dagger with which the murder was committed, he will be at once reminded of the ingenious master who made the handle, and so of the town where the latter lived, upon the climate of which he will pass a few criticisms before he returns to the point from which he digressed. Count Guido occupies forty lines in describing to the judges every incident connected with his engagement as gentleman-in-waiting to a certain cardinal, who has absolutely nothing to do with the story. The prisoner's advocate, by way of showing his own domestic and playful disposition, opens his monologue with the following pleasing address to his son:—

Ah my Giacinto! he's no ruddy rogue,
Is not Cinone! What! to-day we're eight!

Seven and one's eight I hope, old curly-pate!
Branches me out his verb-tree on his slate
Amo-as-avi-atum-are-ans
Up to *aturus*,—person, tense, and mood,
Quies me cum subjunctivo (I could cry)
And chews Corderius with his morning crust.

Dogberry and Verges are very excellent comical characters, but were there no other speakers in "Much Ado about Nothing" we might have too much of them. Does Mr. Browning really think we can endure 1805 lines of the same kind from this insufferable old chatterbox, just because he thinks him an amusing specimen of human nature in the seventeenth century? But perhaps the most thoroughly unnatural piece of portrait-painting occurs in the speech of Caponsacchi at the trial, who, though speaking at white heat from indignation, yet having occasion to mention a speech made to him by Conti, a fat canon, mimics the very tones and gestures that the latter used:—

At vespers Conti leaned beside my seat
I' the choir, part said, part sung, "*In ex-cel-sis*,"—

All's to no purpose; I have louted low;
But he saw you staring,—*quia sub*—don't incline

To know you further . . .
So be you rational, and make amends
To little Light-skirts yonder—in *secula*
Seculo-o-o-orum.

Any one can see here that Mr. Browning has noticed the way in which Roman Catholic ecclesiastics occasionally perform the service, and has introduced the passage to make the figure of the canon as life-like as possible; but to suppose that Caponsacchi, when so deeply moved, would have tried to make his judges laugh by such mimicry, is to violate alike propriety and nature. A touch like this shows that the genius of the author of "The Ring and the Book" is not really dramatic. He regards his characters as so many mental phenomena, and as a natural consequence he speaks for them himself.

Mr. Browning's language naturally adapts itself to the bent of his thought. As it is his object to show ordinary things from an extraordinary point of view, the style which he employs is almost always the grotesque. The thought which he expresses is often commonplace, but it is so tossed and buffeted about by the poet's ingenuity, that the reader at first sight fails to decipher the meaning, and when he masters it he naturally enough doubts whether it can be so simple as he had hitherto supposed. We can, in fact,

only account for the admiration which many readers profess to feel for Mr. Browning's difficult style by referring it to the self-complacency which is felt after the successful solution of a puzzle. The most noticeable feature in this poet's manner is, we think, his abundant use of metaphor, a figure by which he contrives ingeniously to disguise and enliven the frequent homeliness of his thought. "Fifine at the Fair" consists of a number of clever paradoxes, elucidated by an equal number of those illustrations which Plato called "myths." For instance, the speaker in the monologue having exhibited a great delight at the charms of a strolling dancer, his wife not unnaturally protests; but her husband, after complaining, with a shrug, that women never can "comprehend mental analysis," explains, with infinite tact, in a parable which extends over some sixty or seventy lines, that his feeling for his wife as compared with Fifine, is as his relative value for a picture of Raphael and a sketch-book of Doré. The compliment is, of course, irresistible, and the lady is pacified. Indeed, in Mr. Browning's own mind metaphor frequently stands for argument. Thus he seems fully to have satisfied himself of the soundness of his dramatic principles, when he has shown how exactly parallel they are to the work of a goldsmith in making a ring. His metaphors, we need not say, are always ingenious, or they would not be his, but they are too often merely harsh and extravagant. Take, for instance, the figure by which Caponsacchi indicates the universal loathing and isolation which will be Guido's lot if he be acquitted.

And thus I see him slowly and surely edged
Off all the table-land whence life up-springs,
Aspiring to be immortality,
As the snake hatched on hill-top by mis-
chance,

Despite his wriggling, slips, slides, slidders
down

Hill-side, lies low and prostrate in the smooth
Level of the outer-place, lapsed in the vale.

This is meant, of course, to be the vivid rhetoric of an indignant man, but there is nothing impressive in the figure. We see little in common between the snake's position and Guido's except their discomfort; the simile is, in short, not forcible, but simply violent.

With regard to his idiom and versification, all Mr. Browning's tendencies are towards — decomposition. War is declared with the definite article and the relative pronoun, and any preposition is

liable to lose its final letter on the slightest provocation. We should like to know Mr. Browning's authority for cutting off the final letter "n" in "on." Shakespeare has, of course, familiarized us with such abbreviations as "i'the" for "in the," and "o'the" for "of the," but the practice is not sufficiently euphonious to be frequently admitted in modern poetry, much less extended. As the most far-fetched metaphors are employed to illustrate the most common thoughts, so the most out-of-the-way words are in favour simply because they are strange, and the mere jingle of sound is sometimes the sole excuse for an entire line, as —

Thus wrangled, brangled, jangled they a month.

Mr. Browning's metre is blank verse, but of a kind which is only distinguished from prose by its jerks and spasms. The sober iambic road of the normal metre is not sufficiently adventurous for one who loves to make poetical travel accessible only to the Livingstones of literature. At every third line we are tripped up on a point of emphasis, or are brought to a halt before a yawning chasm, which can only be cleared by a flying anapaest. In short, throughout a composition so bulky as "The Ring and the Book," we fear we should find it hard to select one paragraph which might serve as a model of good English, or, indeed, one which is free from the marks of violence and eccentricity.

The failure of so remarkable a work as "The Ring and the Book," — for, in spite of its ingenuity and power, a failure it certainly is, — should be a warning to all who think that by mere force of intellect they can alter the laws of poetry. Genius, insight, and wit strive in vain against the constitution of the human mind. The old dramatists were right. Shakespeare, with his wide and practical intelligence, knew that action was the test of character. His purpose was therefore to represent an action, in which the actors should express themselves in such a manner as the spectators might feel was just under the circumstances. Mr. Browning, on the other hand, brimful of modern scepticism, asks, "What is action? What is the value of a fact in itself? How many pros and cons there are for everything that is done! Admitting that a thing can only be true in one way, in how many different ways will it present itself to different minds, and who shall determine which is the truth? Again, how perishable is action! The

great Roman murder-case was once known over the world, and where is the memory of it now? There is nothing real but the soul of man, whose laws, discoverable by mental analysis, are so unchanging, that, by an *a priori* construction of motives, the past can be recovered in its reality.* We have endeavoured to show that could this be done it would not be worth doing in poetry. Poetry, when serious, seeks only what is really great or permanent, and the thoughts of any characters, however curious, on a murder however celebrated, are not equal to the dignity of verse. But, in any case, the effect which we are promised does not follow; the poetical illusion is not created; for the characters represented are not living creatures, but phases of the writer's own mind, dressed in antique costume. The work, whatever admiration we may feel for its ingenuity and daring, is not the work of a poet, but of a metaphysician, or, if Mr. Forman will, of a psychologist.*

We have so lately discussed the merits of the last "school" of poetry, which, according to Mr. Forman, has any "prospects," that we shall now only examine briefly its theory of composition. "The Pre-raphaelites," as we learn from our critic, were originally a brotherhood, banded together for the maintenance and propagation of two cardinal principles. By the first of these, we are told "a rigid adherence to the simplicity of nature was to be enforced (*sic*) in writing poetry." By all means. We have not a word to

say against such an excellent piece of despotism, though we find something slightly comical in these brethren, thrice sworn to die in defence of what we should have thought a self-evident truth. But when we come to examine what the Pre-raphaelites mean by "Nature" the entire aspect of the question changes. Nature, in their vocabulary, signifies a violent hatred of, custom in every form, customary action, customary thought, customary feeling; and, in the second place, an equally strong persuasion of their own personal infallibility. We are accustomed, for instance, to consider that the everyday matters of life being of trivial importance, can find no place in serious poetry. Mr. Coventry Patmore, on the other hand, would persuade us that there is real poetry in tea-cups, nosegays, gloves, and pap-boats, because these are the accessories of Domestic Love, who makes all things beautiful. We are accustomed to associate love in poetry with ideas of romance. A sin against Nature, says Mr. Woolner; the enlightened reader ought to interest himself in the most matter-of-fact courtship, provided the lover be a metaphysician, and his mistress die in the course of the poem. He accordingly, in "My Beautiful Lady," chronicles for us every incident—and these do not appear to have been varied,—in a course of true love—and this seems to have run exceedingly smooth,—which extends itself over a hundred and seventy pages. We are told how the lady walked in a wood; how she picked a flower; how she heard a bell toll; we are even informed of the topics of the lovers' conversation:—

I recollect her, puzzled, asking me
What that strange tapping in the woods might be.

I told of gourmand thrushes, which,
To feast on morsels oozy rich,
Cracked poor snails' curling niche.

We know not whether to wonder most at the audacity of poets who would have us believe that poetry can exist in petty objects, which become ridiculous when treated as of importance, or at the credulity of those readers who accept this ungrammatical doggerel as poetry, simply because they are assured it is composed on true principles of art. The truth is, however, that the most efficacious method of imposing on that scepticism which springs from ignorance is dogmatism. Throughout the poetry of the Pre-raphaelites the personal pronoun "I" is almost

* This article was in type before the appearance of Mr. Browning's last poem, "Red Cotton Nightcap Country." There is, however, nothing in this poem to make us modify our remarks on the analytical method. Given certain tragic facts, a man induced to burn off his hands, and finally to throw himself headlong from a tower, to find the mental forces that produced these terrible results. Such is the poet's scheme. A conflict between animal passion and superstitious belief might of course be represented in a French pathological drama, nor are there wanting in Mr. Browning's poem passages which, occurring in such a play, would be powerfully effective. But for a poet to conduct us as commentator through the whole history of a suicide, from his birth to his death, giving paradoxical keys to his most ordinary actions, disguising commonplace under misty metaphors, rambling into endless trains of grotesque reflection, and finally, after several thousand lines, to land us in the conclusion that the man put an end to himself, not because he was mad, but because he was distracted—all this reminds us of nothing so much as Tony Lumpkin's famous midnight drive of five-and-twenty miles "round the house, and round the house, and never touching the house." "I first took them down Feather Bed Lane, where we stuck fast in the mud; I then rattled them crack over the stones of Up-and-Down Hill; I then introduced them to the gibbet on Heavy-Tree Heath; and from that by a circum-bendibus I fairly lodged them in the horse-pond at the bottom of the garden."

always present. They write like solitaires, to whom everything in the external world appears in a private and particular light, and everything in their own minds seems of public importance. They forget the character attributed to those who measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves with themselves, and hence their style is full of that ill-concealed egotism, which can only be checked by an inborn sense of humour, or by contact with the actual world. We cannot account for the publication of the following poem, entitled "The Woodspurge," by Mr. Rossetti, the founder of the school, except by supposing it to be the work of one whose every thought appears to him worth recording:—

The wind was dead, the wind was still,
Shaken out loose from tree and hill;
I had walked on at the wind's will;
I sat now for the wind was still.

Between my knees my forehead was;
My lips drawn in said not Alas!
My hair was over in the grass;
My naked ears heard the day pass.

My eyes wide open had the run
Of some ten weeds to rest upon;
Among those ten, out of the sun,
The woodspurge flowered three cups in one.

From perfect grief there need not be
Wisdom or even memory.
One thing then learned remains to me;
The woodspurge has a cup of three.

We are not so matter of fact as to suppose that Mr. Rossetti simply intended the public to be informed how he became acquainted with a fact in botany. Nor do we pronounce any opinion on the profundity of the conclusion in the two first lines of the last stanza, though we venture to doubt whether a man absorbed in "perfect grief" would have been so conscious of his personal appearance. But one thing is plain. Mr. Rossetti does not understand that what chiefly strikes the reader's fancy in these lines is the very distinct portrait of a gentleman, seated on the grass, with his head between his knees, and a prodigiously fine growth of hair. Would Mr. Rossetti think it fitting for any man so to expose his private grief in real life? If not, why should it be permissible in poetry?

The second principle of the Pre-raphaelites is that "poetry should be conceived in the spirit, or with the intent, of exhibiting a pure unaffected style." This is marvellous enough. Imagine the "Iliad," "Paradise Lost," a satire of

Dryden, or a lyric of Herrick, conceived for the purpose of "exhibiting a style!" But we have here a symptom of the growth of that technicalism, which is the peculiar characteristic of modern poetry. Almost all contemporary verse-writers seem to form their style first and to insert their thought afterwards. In the work of the Pre-raphaelites the tendency manifests itself in two ways. One is the reproduction of those special and well-defined external forms, which poets in other ages have used to embody the particular thoughts of their own day. In a recent article we pointed out how Mr. Rossetti dresses à la Dante, and comes abroad crowned with aureoles, and beset with Loves, in the midst of railways, newspapers, mechanics' institutes, and credit mobiliers. This incongruity to plain minds produces an absurd effect, but the extreme elaboration of Mr. Rossetti's style provokes the warmest admiration from critics like Mr. Forman. "In these translations" (says our author, descanting, in his usual dithyrambic manner, on a work of Mr. Rossetti's) "we constantly meet passages which, *setting aside the thought or sentiment conveyed*, are beautiful, musical, aromatic (*sic*), whatever you like to call it, of their own nature, by virtue that is of their combination of sound." A good line in poetry is one which expresses a just thought, in the best way possible in metre. Byron's lines on the battle of Waterloo, for instance, are extremely poetical, because they convey noble and masculine sentiment in language of appropriate harmony. In the works of Mr. Rossetti, and still more in Mr. Swinburne's, we often meet with passages, as Mr. Forman says, of perfect vocal harmony, but they are generally "versus inopes rerum," the thought or feeling expressed being so meagre, that we derive little pleasure from them beyond the mere jingle of the words. The ear is pleased at the expense of the reason.

The other manner in which the Pre-raphaelites "exhibit simplicity of style" amounts to nothing else than the "Art of Sinking in Poetry." The delicate perception which Mr. Rossetti often displays of the value of sound, does not save him from intolerable meanness of style where he means to be particularly simple. In a poem called "My Sister's Sleep," he revives the old English metre to which Mr. Tennyson has given celebrity in "In Memoriam." Now, as the feeling of this piece is meant to be common, we should

have thought it would rather have found expression in one of the standard national metres than in a measure which, even in its original, is clearly the result of experiment and adaptation. The "In Memoriam" stanza has no natural pauses like the eights and sixes of the ballad metre, so that the rhetorical artifices of the poet are perceptible, and when he writes, as he supposes, simply, he writes quasi-prose. Here, for instance, is a specimen stanza:—

I had been sitting up some nights,
And my tired mind felt weak and blank;
Like a sharp strengthening wine it drank
The stillness and the broken lights.

In this stanza, the first two lines are only simple because they are mean. The two last are not simple at all, but full of affectation. The passage has none of that pathos of memory which constitutes the charm of Cowper's lines on his mother's picture; the minuteness of the recollection is felt to be so much unnecessary personality. Here is another stanza in the same poem, absolutely prose from first to last, with the exception of the single rhyme, which is consequently entirely out of place:—

Just then in the room over us
There was a pushing back of chairs;
As some, who had sat unawares
So late, now heard the hour, and rose.

We should have thought it impossible to praise writing of this kind. Mr. Forman, however, finds a subtle touch of poetry in the second line, which, instead of sinking to the lowest depth of meanness, appears to express "an incident of muffled sound," intended to help "the dead-still action of the poem." So hopelessly do men lose themselves when they leave the light of their natural taste to follow the will-o'-the-wisp of metaphysics!

We have taken a rapid survey of the chief forms of contemporary poetry and have pointed out what we consider its radical faults. We make no apology for not dwelling on its beauties, or for challenging poetical reputations of long standing. For the first there is no need, and for the second, it is not the fame of this or that poet, but the interests of English poetry itself, which are involved in the issue. Sound English poetry must, as we believe, be the expression of vigorous native thought in the most suitable native idiom. Our contemporary poetry, on the other hand, has ceased to be representative; it no longer expresses

the common experience of men, but suggests only the private views of the poet on the subject he selects. The poet is therefore prone to two grave errors in the conception of his poems; he either selects subjects which in themselves are incapable of poetical expression, or, if the subject chosen be proper, he presents it in an unnatural and disproportioned form. He is also chargeable with serious faults of expression, in so far as by his technical devices he makes language, which is the vehicle of thought, more noteworthy than the thought which is conveyed. It remains to consider the cause of the private position which the poets occupy, and of the sects into which they are divided.

And first let us hear Mr. Forman's account of the origin of those "schools" which he has so ingeniously classified, and which he admires so much.

Poetry, he says, does not it is true present that compact appearance, which the Elizabethan drama got from a national coherence of sentiment and habit. Still the esthetic in Man is probably as strong now in this country as it was in any other age and place, though, from the lack of a universal ideal of life, the ideal in art is special to each great artist. This comes from the disintegration of society, which has gone on for a long while, breaking and breaking old ideas, and institutions, and forms of thought; and the social upbuilding is still to do.

Mr. Forman, therefore, maintains that the divisions of poetry reflect faithfully the divisions of society. Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that his description of the time is correct, and that England is struggling to emerge from a condition of anarchy resembling that of a South American Republic; this would in no way explain the poetical phenomena which he describes. A nation does not change its character and language with its laws. We do not find that Virgil and Horace, the first poets under the Cæsars, aired new ideals of life, or revived aboriginal metres; we know, on the contrary, that they accepted the circumstances of their time, and developed the hexameter handed down to them by Lucretius, Lucilius, and Catullus, their republican predecessors. Nor, except in poetry, is there any trace in our own country of those radical divisions of feeling and language which Mr. Forman suggests. In Parliament, Bar, and Pulpit our tongue is still used with purity, and sometimes even with eloquence. The daily newspapers do not resort to dialects to express

their political differences; indeed, we doubt—proh pudor!—whether there is better representative English to be read than in the leading articles of the “Times” during the Session of Parliament.

If, then, we must explain the existence of our poetical sects otherwise than by the change in the constitution of society, we know of no cause to which we can so naturally refer it as to the change of principle in the poets themselves. Poetry is by nature the most social and the least technical of the arts. It is local, patriotic, it may even be provincial, but it is nowhere private. There is neither mystery nor monopoly in its themes. Its noblest forms have had a popular origin. It has afforded materials for the genius of the dramatist in the religious holiday show, and in the rude horseplay of a country feast. When the epic poet opens his subject, he announces it to his audience as a matter with which they are all acquainted, and invokes the aid of the Muse to present it in a worthy form. The feelings to which the old lyric poets appeal with imperishable freshness are simple and few, because they are common. The satirist takes his theme from the vices or follies of his countrymen. Nay, the very artificialities of society are the poet's opportunity, and true genius has created a form of immortal verse to preserve the mysteries of the toilet, the fortunes of the card-table, and the “conduct of a clouded cane.”

Modern poetry has changed all this. Instead of a genial companionship in thought and feeling with his fellow men, the poet now starts from a basis of solitude and separation. When Wordsworth, the great herald of the “new departure,” was meditating “The Excursion,” he retired, as he tells us in his preface, into his native mountains to compose “a philosophical poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society, and to be entitled ‘The Recluse,’ as having for its subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in solitude.” In this seclusion the modern poet himself becomes the centre of the universe; he treats his subjects not as they are presented to the common intelligence, but as they appear to his own reflection. He leaves the world of men for a world of ideas, in which *his* every thought appears valuable, and *his* feelings alone seem to be true. To minds wrapped in self-contemplation, even the necessity of external themes disappears, and the poets, like the stars,—to use

the image of Wordsworth's most distinguished disciple,—

Demand not that the things *without them*
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

Such philosophic apathy is indeed attainable by few, but elsewhere the attitude of the poet towards society is one of contempt and antagonism. The unenlightened body of their countrymen is dubbed by them Philistine; a name the more terrible because, in its English application, we have never yet found the man who knew precisely what it meant. “Go hang yourselves all,” says the modern poet with Malvolio, “you are idle shallow knaves; I am not of your element; you shall know more hereafter.”

Now, the poet having taken up this isolated position, what effect will his principles have upon his work? Where will he select his subjects, and what will be the character of his style? This question is answered in a very different manner by two distinct sets of modern poets, whom, for the sake of convenience, we will call Philosophers and Artists. Let Wordsworth speak for the first:—

The sum of what was said is, that the poet is chiefly distinguished from other men by a greater promptness to think and feel without immediate external excitement, and a greater power in expressing such thoughts and feelings as are produced in that manner. But these passions, thoughts, and feelings are the general passions, thoughts, and feelings of men. And with what are they connected? Undoubtedly with our moral sentiments and animal sensations, and with the cause which excites them, with the operations of the elements, and the appearances of the visible universe, with storm and sunshine, with the revolutions of the seasons, with cold and heat, with loss of friends and kindred, with injuries and resentments, gratitude and hope, fear and sorrow. These are the sensations of other men, and the objects which interest them. The poet thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions. How then can his language differ in any material degree from that of all other men, who feel vividly and think clearly? It might be *proved* that it is impossible.

Here, then, is a distinct theory of what poetical conception and expression ought to be. Now, as to the first part of the definition, we entirely agree with the principle there stated, but we think it is evident that Wordsworth's application of the principle is quite different from what his words naturally imply. Though the subjects which he enumerates are doubtless treated in his verse, they are to him subjects not for representation, but re-

flection. Throughout the whole range of his poetry, we fail to recall any single figure resembling, in its action and passion, the person of a social being. He treats not of things but of their causes. Nothing in his verse is presented to us directly; everything is seen through the medium of his own philosophical thought. Poetry with him meant Philosophy in metre.

With regard to Wordsworth's theory of style, it should be remembered that his preface, from which we quote, is directed as an attack against those poets who, at the end of the eighteenth century, had reduced the English classical style to mere verbiage. So far as his criticism is aggressive it is telling and true. But his hatred of artificiality led him into extreme principles, which, if fully applied, would destroy all the pretensions of Poetry to be called an art. As conceived by Wordsworth, poetry is, in its expression, separated from prose by the faintest line of demarcation. Yet it is plain that the mere use of metre makes the language of the poet differ, in a very "material degree," from the language of other men. There are certain subjects and thoughts which can be expressed in verse far better than in prose: there are, again, other themes which no amount of metrical artifice could render poetical. But of the use of rhetoric in verse, Wordsworth seems to have had no conception, and though he professes to observe in his language the laws of metre, we can remember few passages in his poems where he impresses us by the music of his numbers. Assured of the poetical nature of his own thoughts he believed that they would spontaneously take a fit form of words. His influence on the course of poetry was therefore entirely democratic, and tended to level those natural distinctions which separate verse from prose. In his poetical style he often reminds us of Roland's appearance at court in woollen stockings and shoe-strings. He is always truly simple; we need not say he is often eminently noble; but he is not seldom merely rustic. His solitary habits led him to form an exaggerated estimate of his most casual thoughts; and it is only when we remember that he composed a poem in fourteen books on the development of his own mind, that we can possibly understand how the author of "Laodamia" can also have been the author of "Peter Bell" and "The Idiot Boy."

Now as in the mind of Wordsworth the whole value of poetry lay in the thought,

so our living poets, running into exactly the opposite extreme, hold that all which is important is the expression. Society is generally speaking as essential to men's intellectual health as to their material prosperity. The ordinary mind which seeks to exist upon itself will starve. The principles of Wordsworth could only have maintained themselves in times when the greatness of external action had stimulated to an extraordinary degree the powers of individual thought and feeling. But the magnitude and novelty of the events which marked the great Revolutionary era have disappeared in our time, and the thoughts "of a recluse on Man, Nature and Society," are not now likely to be very memorable. Our poets, indeed, still speak as philosophers, but the fuel for their fire has gone, and they do but cover the want of the inner glow by the splendour of their language and verse. Poetry in the view of the second great class of poets, whom we have called Artists, has come to be identical with the creation of Form. We are forever hearing the hackneyed phrase, "Art for the sake of art," applied to poetry, and throughout his book Mr. Forman speaks of the poet as an artist, classifying him directly with the painter, the musician, and the sculptor, as if the other arts were precisely the same as the poet's in their nature and function. Phrases and theories of this kind all point to the spread of technicalism in poetry; to the tendency, that is, to exalt language at the expense of thought. Look where we may, we find little besides word-painting, alliteration, the revival of old forms, the construction of new metres, and it seems to be generally believed that any thought, however mean, can be transmuted into poetry in the crucible of style. The ambition of every poet is not to express a good thought in the most appropriate manner, but to put a thought into such a curious form of words as no poet has conceived before. Hence Mr. Forman's schools.

Now this tendency of modern poetry, we have endeavoured to show, is a palpable ill. Poetry is catholic, and has neither sects nor schools. The "individuality" of the modern poet, as his flatterers call it, is not a sign of vigour, but of corruption and decline, fatal alike to the manliness of our thought and the purity of our language. As far as poetry is concerned we may adapt the words of Norfolk:—

The language we have learned these thousand years,

Our native English, now we must forego;

For now our tongue's use is to us no more,
Than an unstringed viol or a lute,
Or like a cunning instrument cased up,
Or, being open, put into his hand,
Who knows no touch to tune the harmony.

For this evil there will be no cure but the restoration of a sound standard of national taste. It must be once more acknowledged that it shows ignorance and bad taste to be carried away by the mere sound of words; that it is the right of every reader to reason on what he reads with severity, and his duty to understand before he admires. It must be understood that poetry does not lie in mere curiosities of language; that, for instance, champagne does not become poetical when described as "the foaming grape of eastern France," and to call the sacramental cup "the chalice of the grapes of God," is an impurity both of taste and of English. On this matter every reader who has studied the literature of his country, ought to be a judge. "There are many," says Dryden, "who understand Greek and Latin, and yet are ignorant of their mother tongue. The proprieties and delicacies of the English are known to few; 'tis impossible even for a good wit to understand and practise them without the help of a liberal education, long reading and digesting of those few good authors we have among us, the knowledge of men and manners, the freedom of habitude and conversation with the best company of both sexes; and, in short, without wearing off the rust he has acquired while laying in a stock of learning." Since Dryden's time the number of good authors has largely increased, and our language is still used with purity in society. It ought not, therefore, to be so "difficult to understand the purity of English, and critically to discern not only good writers from bad, but also to distinguish that which is pure in a good author from that which is vicious and corrupt in him."

Above all it should be required that the subjects chosen be of a kind to appeal to the head and the heart of every educated Englishman. We might learn a lesson on this point from our forefathers, whom the modern "dilettanti" affect to despise. Nothing is more common than to hear ignorant depreciation of what is broadly called eighteenth-century taste and poetry, and that both were limited, and in some respects artificial, we readily admit. But the men of the Restoration and of Queen Anne's time knew the kind of poetry of which their

age was capable, and the form in which it could best be expressed, and in consequence their writing is intelligible and readable at the present day. As for ourselves we are so doubtful of our own taste — nay, so sceptical of our own feelings — that we are liable to be imposed upon by every species of literary masquerade and mumming. Our poets seek to reflect for us the feeling of every age except our own. We have nothing really in common with the religious sentiments of Greek tragedy. There is little of any kind left to us from the Middle Ages, and it is senseless to try to recover what is gone. We cannot, like the Elizabethan poets, "warble a native woodnote wild" in an age which is already over-civilized; and when Mr. Tennyson says that he "sings but as the linnet sings," it is plain that he deceives himself. If poetry is to live, we must have a poetry reflecting our own life and thought.

The question then naturally arises, Do the materials for such poetry exist? Mr. Morris unhesitatingly answers there are none; we live in "an empty day." So long as society is active and language pure, we shall refuse to believe in the justice of this taunt; but until a poet arises to "show the very age and body of the time his form and pressure," we shall have to endure it. Meantime we are led to ask how it is that a poet can affirm that there is nothing worth writing of in "the actions of men, their hope, their fear, their pleasure." Undoubtedly there are obvious difficulties in the way of the poet in search of living themes. In an age of paper, when public opinion embodies itself in an outward form, the realities of individual life and feeling are apt to disguise themselves, while the facilities of travel help to level those local features which give such character to our earlier poetry. But these are only modifying causes. They deprive life of its outer garb of picturesqueness and romance, but they cannot destroy poetry, whose abode is in the human heart.

The great obstacle to the production of plain and direct poetry is the almost invincible prejudice that all poetry must be necessarily embodied in a romantic form. All modern poetry has doubtless taken this form. Now by the term Romanticism we mean to denote, not so much the love of purely fanciful images of liberty and marvel, as the encroachment of the imagination on the domain of experience, and the application to established society of ideas springing out

of a sentimental desire for a lawless and primitive freedom. Sir Walter Scott has described with his usual felicity the effects of this habit upon a character like Waverly, secluded by circumstances from society, and weakened in judgment by indiscriminate excursions throughout the whole field of literature. But to such an extent has this spirit now spread that, so far from being recognized and deplored as a disease prejudicial alike to taste and common sense, it is regarded as part of the poetical temperament. A person of a visionary and abstracted turn is now called at choice "romantic" or "poetical." In the summary of last year's events we find Mazzini's character described by a writer in the "Times" as that of "a poet or a prophet rather than of a statesman." We know not why these should be considered distinct and incompatible varieties of mind. Milton, the greatest of English poets, was a statesman and controversialist, and the practical wisdom running through Shakespeare's plays gives evidence of an intelligence not inferior to Bacon's own. Again, how small a portion of great English poetry can be called romantic in the sense in which we use the word! The reason of this is plain. Romanticism expresses the aspiration of natural as opposed to civil liberty. It is the poetry of the mind, which cannot find room for its energies to expand in active life, and which therefore turns its gaze inward, or transforms itself in a world of books. It takes no root in a community whose action is at once great and free. No symptoms of the temper are visible in the commonwealths of Athens and Rome, where it was open to the best intellects to find free expression in public affairs; nor for the same reason are there before this century any traces of it in England. Such apparent indications as exist in the shape of the amatory sonnets and conventional pastoralism of the Elizabethan age, or the conceits of Cowley's school, merely represent a temporary taste for fashionable exotics; they are not the growth of the English mind.

Romanticism in England is an importation from the Continent. The true cradle of the spirit was despotic France; its great original representative is Rousseau; its typical works are, in France, "*La Nouvelle Héloïse*," and in Germany "*The Sorrows of Werther*," both of which sprang out of that introspective mood which is reflected in Rousseau's own filthy "*Confessions*." The spirit of indi-

vidual liberty, here first apparent, formed the nucleus of that vast body of philosophy, philanthropy, and sentiment which grew in France during the eighteenth century. When finally the energy of all this brooding thought, operating on an oppressed people, found delivery in the French Revolution, it seemed as if the pent up forces of centuries had discharged themselves upon a single age. The huge battles that followed, the overthrow of so many thrones, the sudden elevation of so many individuals before obscure, the splendid courage, and the wild adventure of the period, seemed indeed to have introduced a new era of Romance. It was the dramatic aspect of the Revolution which struck the imagination of the energetic and adventurous English race, and expressed itself with true national force in the roving genius of Byron and the patriotic chivalry of Scott. But the dreamy and altogether unpractical pretensions of French idealism found no favour with the English mind. To the clear and sceptical intelligence of Byron, curiously introspective as he was and open to the power of romantic passion, the prophecies of the infinite improvement of the human race sounded like idle tales. The English aristocracy, long used to the art of government, braced by real liberty, and schooled in the style of the great classical authors, rejected with contempt the products of French and German sentimentalism. There is no better reflection of the national mind of the period than in the pages of "*The Anti-Jacobin*," particularly the excellent parodies of "*The Knife-grinder*" and "*The Rovers*." This strong national antipathy serves to explain the ferocity with which the critics of that day attacked the writings of those poets who were most influenced by French ideas.

Time, however, has avenged the poets. It has required but the lapse of a generation to naturalize habits of thought once so uncongenial, and to set up as the sole standard of poetry writings upon which the critics had laid their ban. The doctrine of the moral progress and ultimate perfection of man is now the first article of faith with English Liberalism. Of the early nineteenth-century poets those who are most in favour with our contemporary critics are Wordsworth and Shelley, rather than Byron, the poets of ideas, not the poet of action. The causes of this great revolution in taste it is difficult at present to explain. Much of it may



doubtless be referred to the transfer of power from the upper to the middle classes. The poets of the last century were the representatives, or the clients, of a body born and bred to the government; they wrote in times when England, with an imperial policy, played a great part in the affairs of the world, and the atmosphere of their poetry is therefore public and social. But in the present day, when the foreign politics of England are expressed in the doctrine of non-intervention, when at home society itself acknowledges no standard but that of competition, it is hard for the individual to recognize any interests which are higher and wider than his own. In such a community the eager and imaginative mind is inclined to take refuge in its own ideas, and hence, perhaps, that ominous abstention from politics which is beginning to mark the professors of modern "Culture."

But the historian will understand the progress of events better than ourselves. He will have to determine why the most unromantic society that ever existed pleases itself with likening its own feelings to those of the knight-errant; he will explain why the literary portion of a nation, whose genius lies in practical thought and action, has given itself over to the study of poetical metaphysics; and he will perhaps be able to understand why we have rejected the masculine standard of classical simplicity for the caprices of French idealism, and like Democritus have "excluded sane poets from Helicon." Meantime we can see for ourselves that, though the spirit of romance has extended its area, it has lost its inspiration. The revival of chivalric poetry has indeed outlasted the age of modern adventure, but in a literary, no longer in a living form. Marmion and William of Deloraine are replaced by King Arthur. The poetical creed, which carried along many minds with the force of religion, has petrified into ritualism. Instead of the enthusiastic rhapsodies of Shelley, we have the splendid but meaningless music of Mr. Swinburne, with his *Herthas*, his *Hymns*, his *Litanies*, and his *Lamentations*. Other writers, failing any longer to find in modern society the images of romance, have turned back to

the forms of the past, and have reduced poetry to such mere furniture and costume, as picturesque sonnets à la Dante, or stage "properties" after the Early English. Truly to those who look on life and poetry with these eyes, the present must indeed be "an empty day."

Nothing is so likely to recruit the exhausted powers of our poets as the admission of fresh air from the outer world. There is no lack of fit subjects. Human nature as viewed, not indeed by the kaleidoscope of ideas, but by the standard of experience and religion, affords a field as rich now as it proved to the Roman satirist. The authors of "Adam Bede" and "Martin Chuzzlewit" have not found the present a barren age. The aspect of men and things, we are told by modern exquisites, is vulgar and prosaic:—

Sed quid magis Heracleas,
Aut Diomedæas, aut mugitum labyrinthi ?

Why should we turn in preference to the legends of the Round Table, or the dreams of an Earthly Paradise? Themes of public interest are certainly not wanting. It is inconceivable that Englishmen, with feeling and imagination, should continue to regard themselves as mere material atoms, and not as actors in the history of a country, the love of which moved Milton, Republican as he was, to celebrate the feudal glories of

An old and haughty nation, proud in arms.

The political and religious issues of our time are not less momentous than when Dryden wrote "*Absalom and Achitophel*," and "*The Hind and the Panther*." Or if it be said that the interests of men have extended beyond the bounds of country, why cannot the poet look on life with the same clear sense that manifests itself through the force and passion of "*Childe Harold*?" It is not, however, for the critic to dictate subjects to the poet; the duty of the former is to require that whatever subject be represented in poetry, its treatment shall be generally intelligible, and that the poet's language be plain and pure. Let only this much be accomplished, and poetry, instead of an enervating article of luxury, will again become a national power.

From The Cornhill Magazine.
WILLOWS: A SKETCH.

PART III.

CHAPTER VI.

(continued.)

WE drifted away from politics, and talked of the coming summer—planning picnics and excursions.

"I came down by a late train the other day," said George Henderson, "and as I walked through the woods by moonlight, it occurred to me what a delightful thing a moonlight picnic would be. That bit of open ground just by the lake would be a perfect spot for midnight revels."

"What a romantic idea!" cried I. "A perfect midsummer night's dream. But—"

"But what?"

"I am afraid my *but* was going to be of an uncomplimentary character."

"Then I can guess what it was. You were going to say—How came I to have a romantic inspiration?"

"You are right, and you must confess that there is something surprising in it."

"I am bound to agree with you, of course, though it is hardly fair to expect me to see the incongruity," said George, not quite pleased at being put out of the pale of romance.

"What incongruity?" asked Sir Thomas, who had an uncomfortable habit of being unconscious of general conversation till the tone of it became querulous, when he invariably roused himself, and asked to be put *au fait* of the discussion. "What incongruity? I missed that."

"The incongruity between Henderson and moonshine," said Harry.

"Ah, well! but that does not explain."

But nobody seemed inclined to offer a fuller explanation, and we were silent for a few minutes during which I began rather to repent of having snubbed poor George. I was beginning to suspect what was the source from which he drew his romantic inspirations, and what the explanation of his change of manner, and I feared that there was disappointment in store for him. I said therefore in a tone of apology:—

"I like the idea of a moonlight picnic; why should we not carry it out? What do you say, Grace?"

"I expect Grace says—What does Harry say?" said Lady Raymond, who had come out to consult us about some chintzes, "and if Harry is the wise man

I take him for, he will say that moonlight picnics in the month of May are not to be thought of by sane people."

"Poor Henderson," said Harry, "there's a harder hit for you than Janet's."

"Not at all," said George, "for I quite agree with Lady Raymond: we must have a midsummer night for our revels." "And act scenes from the *Midsummer Night's Dream* with all the tenants to look on," suggested Grace. "It is really a fascinating plan and shall certainly be carried out. Come, Harry dear, you need not look so forbiddingly wise about it."

"I am anxious not to fall into Henderson's error, and drift through romance into madness."

"I think it is just as good a way as the beaten track—through much learning," said Grace. "Tell us, now, what madness can there possibly be in acting scenes from Shakespeare in the wood on a warm, lovely summer's night?"

"None whatever, if one could be sure that the night would be quite warm and lovely, and that one was oneself quite impervious to mist and dew, and that there is no harm in risking one's life for a foolish freak, and—and—"

And Harry looked into Grace's eyes, and Grace looked up at Harry, and blushed a deep rose-red, and said—

"I give in as usual, though I believe it is very bad for you that I should. Do you know, dear, I think I am a very demoralizing wife for you? For I not only always let you have your own way, but I generally acknowledge that you are right."

"Then," said George, "it is clearly the duty of the rest of us to save Harry's character from further deterioration by never allowing him to have his own way, and continually declaring him to be in the wrong. So I propose that we get up our picnic in defiance of these wise married people."

But the picnic would not be got up. Grace's defection and Harry's prudence acted as a wet blanket, and Madeline was in a dreamy mood, and had not taken part in the discussion. So the subject was allowed to drop.

"I used to think," said Grace, "that people did grow wise with being married, but I am sure it is not true of either Harry or me. No, dear, you need not protest; you have been growing more and more silly and idle ever since that evening when you said some very silly things under the cedar-tree; do you remember? And what is more, I, who was silly and idle enough already, have

grown sillier and idler with you. So I believe it is all a delusion about people getting wiser when they marry. I believe marriage has a very bad effect upon one's mind. Don't you agree with me, Madeline?"

Madeline started as if from a dream, and Grace went on—

"Maddy, dear, you shouldn't be up in the clouds when we are discussing such grave subjects. I want you to tell Harry that being married has had a very bad effect upon him and me, and that it is bad generally for the race."

"In what way?" asked Madeline, making an effort to come out of her dream.

"In the way of making people silly and idle."

"I think Grace is stating part of a much wider proposition, which I am inclined to consider a true one—that any great personal happiness is bad for people," said George, rather sententiously.

We protested in chorus against this gloomy philosophy.

"Nevertheless, you may be right," said Madeline; "I have sometimes thought it myself; but I have come to the conclusion that even if it be true that happiness is demoralizing, some people must submit to be spoiled for the good of the community; for if there were not a few very happy people in the world, I don't know who would have courage to live at all."

"Then Grace and I may go on being happy," said Harry, "and have the pleasant consciousness that we are sacrificing ourselves for the common good."

"And nobody must ever reproach us for being silly and idle," said Grace. "I like this theory of Madeline's."

Then Lady Raymond came to the window again, and called to Harry and Grace to come in and judge of the effect of some curtains. She was very busy re-furnishing the rooms she had devoted to the use of the young couple.

We fell into an uncomfortable silence. Madeline had spoken with so much feeling that I felt it would be better to change the subject. But I could think of nothing to say, and we sat looking at one another. At last I said, merely to break the silence—

"I think one of the greatest absurdities in connection with marriage is the habit people have of treating married people as if they were older than unmarried people of the same age."

"They are certainly younger," said Madeline.

"In spite of household cares?" asked George.

"I never can see why people should talk as if only married people had cares," said I.

"As if household happiness were not as much a part of married life as household cares," said Madeline. "I get very tired of hearing people extol marriage in the abstract, while they make out that, in actual life, it is nothing but a tissue of petty worries."

"I expect worry averages much the same among married people as among the unmarried," said George.

"Of course it does." And then, with involuntary earnestness, Madeline added, "Only with married people the worries are easier to bear, because there are two backs to every burden." She checked herself abruptly. A sudden rush of feeling had made her speak with a warmth that was hardly judicious. She made some excuse about its getting late and the children's tea-time, and left us hurriedly. In a few seconds George Henderson bethought himself that a short walk would be pleasant before dinner, and I was left alone with Mrs. Barnard and Sir Thomas.

"What is the matter with Madeline?" said Mrs. Barnard; "and why did she go off in that sudden way?"

"She said it was tea-time, and she must go home to the children," said I.

"It wants half-an-hour to tea-time," said Mrs. Barnard; "she need not have hurried off in that way. I am going home myself in a few minutes, and we might have gone together."

"Well, but as your daughter has deserted you, won't you stay and dine with us?" said Sir Thomas, graciously.

I volunteered to take a message to the cottage, and Mrs. Barnard consented to remain.

"There is something odd about Madeline," said Mrs. Barnard: "I thought she was looking pale and languid while she was sitting here just now. I don't think she can be well. She reads too much at night."

"Ah, that's bad," said Sir Thomas; "it shatters the nerves. Bring her to my wife to be doctored, if she is not quite the right thing. Or send her to Brighton to be braced a little. Girls do get languid in the spring."

"I don't think Madeline is languid," I said, anxious to save her from transporta-

tion to Brighton. "She had a long walk this afternoon, and was perhaps a little tired after it; but she is very strong, and will be all right again to-morrow. I will go after her, and tell her that you are not coming home to tea."

I was glad of the message I had to bear, for I knew she would be thankful for a quiet evening. The constant effort to be cheerful was beginning to tell upon her health; and though I had said she was not languid, I could not conceal from myself that during these spring days her dreamy fits had been very frequent, and that there was almost constantly a look in her face that seemed to express the wish of David for wings like a dove that she might flee away and be at rest. It is hard when all outside voices speak of new life and hope and there is no answering hope within. My heart ached for her as I followed her through the shrubbery.

There were two parallel paths through the shrubbery, separated by a broad belt of American plants, either of which led to the cottage. I chose one at random. Before I had gone far along it, I heard a voice on the other side of the hedge which I quickly recognized as George Henderson's. He was pleading with Madeline.

"But you yourself said just now that burdens were lighter when there were two to carry them. Why not let me help you with yours? Madeline, I know you think that I am very hard and dry—all statistics and political economy. But I have a heart like other men, and I have loved you for a long time, Madeline. I saw how it was with you when no one else did, and I did not speak then, because I knew it would be useless. But now — Madeline, I may not be Raymond's equal in most things, but I am better than him in this, that I know a pearl when I see one."

And Madeline answered, "It is useless. You are very good, and I — perhaps I am mad. But this cannot be. Oh, George, there are some burdens that *must* be borne alone, I am very sorry — very."

And they were silent for a moment. Then Madeline said humbly, "George, I think I have sometimes been unjust to you and unkind. I did not know — I never thought of this. Will you forgive me?"

And George answered, "Would to God that it could make any difference to you whether I forgive you or not!"

"But it does make a difference, if you

would only believe it. I am very lonely, and it is much to me that my friends should be my friends still."

"Madeline, why will you not let me be your friend altogether? You are wasting your strength, your youth, your life on a dream; and you are too good to be wasted."

"Then I shall not be wasted. I am very sorry, George, but it cannot be. Good-by."

And without more words they parted. I heard George's footsteps going slowly back to the house, while Madeline went her way towards the cottage. About a hundred yards further on, the bank of rhododendrons ended, and the two narrow paths merged into a broad greensward. Here Madeline and I met. She gave a little start on seeing me.

"You must have overheard us," she said.

"Yes," I answered. "I suppose I ought to have stopped my ears and run away; but it never occurred to me that I was eavesdropping till I had heard all."

"There is no harm in your having heard," she said. "Poor George!"

"Poor George," I answered; and then I added, "But are you quite sure that you are right — that it would not be better —"

"Dear Janet," she said, "do not tease me about it. I am *quite* sure."

Then I gave my message, and we parted.

Poor George! We did not laugh at him again for some time; not till many years after, when he had found a nice, bright little girl-who was willing to take half his burdens on her shoulders.

CHAPTER VII.

The breath of peace we drew,
With its soft motion made not less
The calm that round us grew.

SHELLEY.

WHEN August came round again there was bustle and excitement at the Dene, for a great event had happened in the newly done-up bedroom. Behind the chintz curtains, over the colour of which we had been consulted that afternoon on the terrace, a new life had dawned.

It was considered necessary that Mrs. Barnard, whose experience in babies was to Lady Raymond's in the proportion of nine to one, should come and stay at the house, so a room close to Grace's was given up to her. There she established herself, with the medicine-chest out of

which she had dosed her own children, from Grace down to Dora, and with a complete library of useful information on the subject of infant humanity. Sir Thomas and Lady Raymond called one another grandpapa and grandmamma. The maid-servants went creaking about the house on tip-toe, with hot flannels and bowls of arrowroot; the neighbours called all day long to leave cards, and hear the butler repeat complacently the old formula, that "the baby was doing very nicely, and Mrs. Raymond was as well as could be expected under the circumstances."

Then by-and-by a few old friends were taken up into the ante-room of the state-chamber, and after a whispered consultation between the nurses and the grandmothers, a little blue-flannel bundle was brought in and handed about for inspection, till a faint wail would reach Grace's ears, and she would insist on having her little one brought back to her.

Then came the great day when Grace was pronounced strong enough to come down into the drawing-room, and Harry installed her in an easy-chair, and brought her cushions and footstools, and we said she looked like one of Sassoferato's Madonnas, with the red shawl flung over her white muslin and blue ribbons.

"I am glad," Grace said, "for in that case I must be growing very calm and good," and she smiled up at Harry from the depths of her great grey eyes.

It was very pretty to see Grace with her baby. She did not worry us to admire it from morning to night; she did not chatter ungrammatical nonsense to it, or fuss about its frills or ribbons — the wonderful little human life seemed to her something too sacred to be insulted with such frivolous puerilities.

"It is so strange," she said to me one day, "having a baby of one's own. I don't think I ever realized before that babies were quite human beings. I used to look upon them as something between a doll and a lap dog — toys for grown people who had left off wanting to play."

"I know you never liked babies," I said.

"I don't know that I 'like babies' now," she answered. "I don't think of little Harry much as a baby. I find myself always thinking of him as a man, and wondering what sort of man he will be. Oh, Janet, when one thinks that all the men and women in the world were once little babies like mine — pure, and innocent, and good — one wonders whether,

if their mothers had only loved them enough, they could ever have grown up to be wicked. Oh, dear! one ought to be so wonderfully wise and good to be a mother, and I am not wise you know — not like you and Madeline."

"I think one is not very far from wisdom," said Lady Raymond, who had come in with Madeline while we were talking, "when one has a great sense of one's responsibilities, and a genuine fear that one may not be equal to them."

"And when one loves very much," added Madeline.

"Dear Madeline, I think you are the nicest philosopher in the world. Your receipt for growing wise is as pleasant as your theory about being happy for the good of other people. Now come and look at my boy and tell me if he has grown like his father yet."

And the bundle on Grace's lap was opened, and Madeline knelt down and kissed a little warm pink face.

"No; he is not like Harry yet," she said, "but I believe he will be when he begins to think and to have expression."

"But indeed he has expression, dear. I have been talking to him a great deal this morning, and he understands me very well. His blue eyes look quite wise."

"What did you talk to him about?"

"Ah, we have secrets, my boy and I," and Grace smiled in the old way that suggested a meaning beyond words. I used to think those smiles of Grace's were rather a take-in, getting her credit for more thought and poetry than was in her. But since her marriage, and above all since the birth of her child, I had discovered depths in her character of which I had not before suspected the existence.

I was glad to see that the birth of Grace's baby did much towards restoring Madeline's spirits. By creating a new interest for us all it threw into the background the event of the last year. We began to date from the birth-day instead of the wedding-day, and Harry and Grace in becoming father and mother ceased to be bride and bridegroom. The education of children usurped the important place in conversation that had been lately occupied by matrimony, and Madeline could join in the discussion of her little nephew's future without the painful effort it cost her to sympathize with her sister's happiness in the love she herself had missed.

Those were pleasant days for all of us — so pleasant that it seems to me, as I

look back at them through the mist of years that divides the then from now, that even had we known that they were numbered, and their number almost spent, we could not if we would have poured into them another drop of happiness—so rich were they in sympathy and friendship, so full of hope and love, and of quiet duty and contentment.

"I like these early autumn days," said Grace one evening, as we sat together on the terrace, as was our wont; "there is a sense of quiet and rest about them that does me good. It gives me a settled feeling that I can never have either in spring or summer."

"Spring is not a season," said Harry, "it is only a day."

"Yes," said Madeline, "it always seems to me that every year there is just one day when one says 'it is spring,' and all the world wakes up. Before that it has been all promise and expectation, and after it come east winds and disappointment." She was unintentionally sketching her own life.

"I don't like spring-time myself," said Harry. "There is a petulant tone about it that always reminds me of the egoism of very young people—boundless promise and desire, with very little stability. Everything is in extremes; the trees are too green, and the sunshine is too yellow. There is no shade, and, except on my one day, no tenderness."

"But, surely, you must like April showers?" I said. "There is nothing more beautiful all the year round than the fresh young green, and the raindrops sparkling in the sunshine."

"They are pretty, but provoking; like the tempers of a spoiled child."

"And how about the real summer months?" said Lady Raynond, "June and July, when the roses are in bloom and the hay is being made, and the corn is just beginning to yellow, and the days are so long that one forgets for a little while how short life is. It is then that the promise of the spring is fulfilled, though in the long delay we have forgotten what it was we looked for, and we enjoy the beauty without remembering that we owe it to the winds and showers of the seed-time."

Then, after a pause, she continued: "This time is very beautiful; but then there is something sad about it. Those brown tints, for instance, that give such richness to the woods, mean that the leaves are already withering and will soon fall; already the corn is being cut down,

and in a few weeks more all the warmth and beauty will be gone."

"Of course it is so," answered Grace. "One knows that this ripper beauty cannot last; but it has about it so much of rest and content, that it gives me a feeling of continuance and security. In the summer months there seems always a rush and bustle: one hurries from one beauty to another, and enjoys nothing: there is too much life—too much variety. The grass is long and rank, the trees are overloaded with foliage, the very sunshine is overwhelming, pouring floods of gold upon us with the ostentation of a millionaire. One grows weary with the ceaseless dust and glare."

"I believe," said Madeline, "paradoxical as it may seem, that after all the pleasures of autumn *are* more lasting than those of summer; one knows that there is nothing to come after, and so one makes the most of the present. It is the only time of the year when one looks, not forward, but back. One gathers in all the happiness of the year, and stores it up in one's heart for use in the future."

We lingered a little longer, drinking in the beauty of the evening. We lingered till a night-wind rustled among the trees, and we thought we felt a few drops of rain falling on our bare heads. The lovely day was over. Why could it not last forever?

CHAPTER VIII.

Fools of nature,
So horribly to shake our dispositions
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls.
HAMLET.

It was very soon after the conversation related in the last chapter, that an event occurred which made a great change in the hitherto monotonous course of my life. My father was seized with paralysis one Sunday in the middle of his sermon. He was carried out of church insensible, and after lingering for a few weeks died without recovering his consciousness. It was found after his death that his affairs were involved, and that though in a will made shortly after my mother's death he had left everything to me, his only daughter, my inheritance consisted mainly of debts.

I was thrown, therefore, penniless upon the world. I had no relations—no friends out of Endle Down. "Come and live with us at the Dene," Lady Raynond said; "I have room for another daughter." And I very gladly went, and

stayed with them several months, during which I had time to face the change in my lot; but I had no intention of living with them altogether. I was young and strong, and able as well as willing to work. So I looked about me for a place as governess, and when I heard of one that was likely to suit me, I told Lady Raymond of it. Of course she would not at first hear of my going away, but I was firm, and at last obtained her consent, on condition of my giving a solemn promise that I would come back to her at once if I did not find myself happy. I did find myself very happy, for my employers were kind, pleasant people, and I grew fond of my pupil, an interesting little girl of seven, whom I was allowed to teach and train as entirely according to my discretion as if she had been my own child. It is not, however, my intention to tell in these pages the story of my own life, except in so far as it was bound up with the lives of Grace and Madeline. I pass on, therefore, to other events at Endle Down, which I think will be best told in the words of Madeline's letters. It was about a year after I had begun my new life that I received the following letter from her:—

“Endle Down, August 16, 18—.

“DEAREST JANET,—

“You must congratulate me—I have become a landed proprietor,—that is, I have entered upon all the duties and responsibilities of ownership of the Pitfield Cottages, and I have become in consequence an extremely busy and important person. But I must tell you how this has come about, or you will be fancying that the squire has died and left me this splendid property, in grateful acknowledgment of my impertinent suggestion that he should look to the condition of the dwellings, of which he pocketed the rents. No such luck has befallen the county. The squire still drinks port in the oak dining-room, and exercises his divine right of swearing at the labourers, and preserving the game on the Pitfield acres; he still snores approval of the doctrines of the church every Sunday in his fusty pew—in short, he still cumbers the ground he would be ashamed to till. You remember the bold step I took about writing to him eighteen months ago, and the agent's civil answer, ‘that it so happened that on the very morning when my note came to hand he was consulting with builders and architects about the improvement of the dwelling-houses in

which I was kind enough to take an interest, and that with the assurance that the matter should receive his most careful consideration, he remained my obedient servant, &c. &c.’ Well, my obedient servant went on considering the matter for twelve whole months, during which I waited, first patiently, and then impatiently, while the cottages got into worse and worse condition. I told the poor people of the agent's promise, and they laughed in my face. By-the-by, I think you did something of the sort when I showed you his letter. So the damp went on soaking through the floors, the rain streamed in at the roofs, the atmosphere of the rooms grew fouler and fouler, as need of drainage became more urgent, and the wretched people grew, if possible, more listless, muddling, thriftless, and generally hopeless and unsatisfactory members of society than ever. For my part, I got so out of heart about them, that I almost gave up visiting them. However, at the end of a year I thought I would make one more venture. So I wrote again to the squire, and this time I got no answer, and there I think I should have left the matter, had it not happened that just about this time I fell in with Harry Raymond one day as I was on my way to see a poor woman who had lately been confined in one of the wretched huts.

“Don't ask me why I never consulted Harry about this business before. Of course he would have been the natural person to go to—oh dear! I sometimes think if more men were like him we women would fuss less, and keep in our places more, as people are always wishing we would. One does not care about doing other people's work when one sees it well done; but when people will not touch their own burdens with even so much as their little finger, it is difficult to resist an impulse to heave them out of the way, even if it does involve leaving the footpath and getting into the mud. As to my not speaking to Harry, I believe the fact is, that I have shrunk very much from contact with him ever since—you know when. But this accident has put us on our old easy footing again, and I am very thankful for it.

“I told him all about my letters to the squire, and he laughed a good deal at my simplicity. However, he did not *only* laugh at me, but took the subject up very warmly. He went over a good many of the houses with me, and was extremely indignant at their condition, declaring

that something must be done at once, though what, would be matter for consideration. The next day he called on the agent, and ascertained at what price the squire, who is, as usual, rather hard up, would be willing to sell the houses. He then set to work to persuade his father that to purchase them would be, not only an act of philanthropy, but a good investment of a few hundred pounds. Accordingly, after what seemed to me a very long and elaborate negotiation, the cottages were bought and repairs begun. The draining business is deferred till the cooler weather, as the sanitary authorities declare that it is not safe to open drains while the thermometer is at 80° in the shade. So I am as impatient for September as any partridge-slayer in the county. In the meantime there is much papering, whitewashing, and new roofing going on, all which I, as vice-landlord, superintend—that is to say, I wander about among the workmen making suggestions, which are generally of such an unpractical nature that they are good only to be withdrawn.

"You know my weakness for all manner of forlorn hopes—sinking ships, incurable patients, graceless reprobates—anything, in fact, that has been given over, and the reform of which one may therefore undertake without fear of ignominy if one fails, and sure of admiration if one succeeds; and you can therefore picture to yourself my delight in the bad-as-can-be condition of my kingdom.

"But that is enough about the cottages. I have left myself hardly room to tell you how we are all doing. Fortunately all our healths may be described, shortly, as very good.

"Little Harry grows, of course, more delightful every day. He really is a dear little boy, and, now that he is beginning to talk, we are in a state of constant excitement over his last new word. As for Grace, she reads books on education from morning to night. Emile is her special study at this moment, and I believe she is already on the look-out for a Sophie for her son. It is a pity your little pupil is too old, or she would have done nicely. I suppose there is no prospect of a second?

"When are you coming to see us? We have so many things to show you and to tell you about, and you ought to have much to tell us. We are getting far away from one another, and already I find myself wondering whether such and such things are big enough to write to

you about; for instance, whether you will care to hear that the honeysuckle on the porch has grown so much this summer that it peeps in at my bedroom window.

"Good-by, dearest.

"Ever your loving

"MADELINE."

Then for some time I did not hear again. I wrote two or three times, but my letters remained unanswered. At last a letter came.

"Endle Down, September 24, 18—.

"You must not be angry with me, dearest, for having treated you so badly. I have been very busy, and, just lately, not busy only, but anxious. Harry is ill—very seriously ill, I fear, though I believe I am the only one who is alarmed about him yet. For the last ten days he has been thoroughly unwell—sleeping very little at night, and constantly restless and uneasy. He declares it is only a bad cold, but the idea has taken possession of me that he may be sickening for typhoid fever, and I cannot shake it off. For the draining at Pitfield has been begun, and he was over there only a day or two before he complained of not feeling well. Of course I have not said anything to alarm Grace or Lady Raymond, but I feel very anxious and unhappy. Oh, Janet, if it is as I fear, and if what I cannot write of should happen, how I shall hate myself for having ever meddled with those cottages at all!

"Ever yours,

"MADELINE BARNARD."

Then a day or two later I received a hurried line:—

"DEAREST JANET,—

"It is as I feared. The doctor has just called, after seeing Harry, to tell us that it is typhoid fever. Poor Grace! Yours,

"M. B."

Three weeks passed, during which I heard nothing from Endle Down. Then I saw in *The Times* that Harry was dead. The next day Madeline wrote:—

"It is all over, Janet. Harry is dead, and it seems as if the world had stood still. Come to me, dearest, and let me talk to you, or I shall go mad. I cannot write about it. I dare not think of it, and yet I can think of nothing else. Everything seems impossible—to look back—to look forward—to live. Oh, Janet, I used sometimes to think that

this would have been easier to bear than that other sorrow; but I know now that it is a thousand times worse. That was a tangible trouble that I could grapple with—a mountain that I could and did scale in time, seeing the sun rise on the other side; but this is a great blank—a negation of everything but the power of suffering.

"How do people ever get over great losses? It seems to me one can never again be free from fear—everything is shaken. But come to me and let me talk to you. Oh, Janet, you *must* come, for I am so haunted by death that while you are away from me I cannot believe that you are still alive.

"Your loving

"MADELINE.

"How selfish I am growing! I have said no word about the others. But what can I say? Everybody is broken-hearted. Lady Raymond sits for hours with her hands folded in her lap and her eyes fixed on them; now and then she takes up her knitting mechanically, and puts it down again as she remembers that they were socks for Harry that she was knitting. Grace is almost distracted at times, and at other times very calm, and, strange as it seems, quite cheerful. I do not understand her.

"Once more, dear, you must come. You will do us all good."

I wrote back, "I am coming," and I went the next day. As I got out of the train a footman from the Dene came up and told me that Lady Raymond had sent the brougham for me, and that Madeline was in it. I gave directions about my box and went down.

Madeline was leaning back in the carriage, with the old strained look in her face. Her greeting was very quiet.

"We will not talk now," she said. "I have told them to put us down by the stile, so that we may walk home, and I may have you a little to myself before you see the others. You are not too tired for a walk?"

I assured her that I was not, and we drove on in silence till we came to the woods; then the carriage stopped and we got out.

It was a quiet autumn evening, and the sun was setting, but not with the warmth and glory of that other evening when Madeline had been surprised by the unwonted beauty of the scene into a confession of the love that seemed akin to it. To-night the sun sank to rest sadly,

wearily, as if the day's work had been unfruitful and disappointing, and it was well that it should be over. The purple and red lines in the sky stood out with crude distinctness—there was no harmonious blending of tints, no tenderness, no sense of a sympathetic presence; and the glassy surface of the lake reflected the harsh colours with unsoftened truth.

It was so impossible that that other evening should not be present to the minds of both of us, that when Madeline said—"It seems as if all my life had been lived between that evening and now," we neither of us felt that there was any need to say what evening.

We were silent again. By-and-by Madeline said—

"I come here very often—whenever I can get away, and I sit and think. How hopeless and sullen it looks."

"It is sullen now, but it will not always be so," I answered. "Summer will come back, and the world will grow green and fair again."

I broke down in my effort at commonplace consolation, for Madeline was looking at me in a wistful, wondering way, as if marvelling at my simplicity. I had spoken by rote: we all do sometimes. It is a bad habit, but one that we are hardly to be blamed for acquiring. We used to speak truth once—warm, living words fresh from our hearts, but the world would not have our true words. It cried out that we were abrupt and odd, and did not know its ways. So we set ourselves to learn its ways, and to use its dainty, mannerly phrases, that go softly, and never stick their elbows out. And meanwhile our true words have got lost, and now sometimes when we want them we cannot find them, and the smooth phrases come instead like hard, polished pebbles, or, if the true words come, we find they have grown hard too. And yet I think some one has said that it is not well to give stones for bread.

"Oh, yes," said Madeline bitterly, "the world will grow green and fair again, the flowers will come back, and the nightingales will sing in the woods, and we shall put away our black gowns and talk quietly about 'poor Harry,' and they will write on his gravestone things that he did not believe, and talk about meeting him in heaven, when all the while . . . Oh, Janet, I am saying horrid things, but it does seem such cruel mockery. You should not have told me that the summer will come again. Do you know, I have thought that when

it does come again, I shall creep away here some evening when the sun is setting in a ruddy glow, and lie down upon the bank among the ferns and foxglove, and go to sleep in the warm sunshine, and then perhaps I shall glide quietly down into the water, and the ripples will go over me, and I shall be at rest again? The green world will do better without me, for my heart is very old and haggard, and there is a curse on me, I think, withering everything I touch."

"Madeline, you must not talk like this," I said.

"No, I know I must not; and that is why I want to go away out of the world, for I cannot talk like other people—I can only screech like a night-bird. The children ask me questions, and I dare not answer them, lest I should frighten them as I have frightened you."

"Do you ever pray?" I asked in a low voice, for Madeline was right, she had frightened me.

"I prayed last night," she said; "it was the first time for many years. I will tell you how it was. I could not sleep; my mind was very dreary, and I had been watching the stars from my bedroom window. Their calmness soothed me at first; but by-and-by it began to repel me. They seemed far off and cold, and I turned away from them. Then I thought of all the sad hearts tossing restlessly about upon the earth; of the sin and the sorrow, and all the pain that no one ever hears of, and which is so much more terrible because it must be borne alone; and it seemed to me as if I heard the moan of all the world going up to the stars, and that the sound grew louder and louder, till it almost deafened me, but still the stars shone down with a bright cold light. And the moaning went on till it was like the noise of waves rushing over my head, and I felt as if I were drowning. Then I could bear it no longer, and I gave a cry, 'O God, have mercy!' But the worst came then, for the groaning changed into a wild laughter, and I heard it all round me, burst after burst, and, as it died away, I heard a voice crying in my ear, 'There is none to hear—none to hear!' I crept into bed and hid myself under the bedclothes, feeling as I remember sometimes to have felt when I was a little child, and I have spoken, thinking there was some one in the room, and have found it empty. One's voice comes back upon one with a hollow echo, that has something ghastly in it. But why should it be so horrible

—this emptiness, this blank? Why should one be afraid of nothing?"

"Are you sure you were not dreaming?" I asked.

"I do not know, and it makes little difference. The voice haunts me, and the fact haunts me. I hear it now," and she shivered again.

"Madeline," I said, "why should you allow your faith to be shaken by fancies that come when you are worn out and ill?"

"These doubts are not fancies," she answered, "and they have not come to me now for the first time. The unbelief is not new, but the horror is new, and I cannot throw it off."

I changed the subject, and asked after Grace.

"She is still in the strange state I described to you," Madeline answered; "but it puzzles me no longer as it did. She told me yesterday that often she cannot realize that Harry is dead, and that at these times she feels quite happy, and watches for him, expecting him to come in at every minute. You will see how eagerly she looks up every time the door opens."

"Her mind must be affected," I said.

"Of course her mind is affected," Madeline replied, with a touch of sarcasm; "but she is not mad, if you mean that. She is perfectly reasonable in everything; and she says that all the while she is looking out for him, she *knows* he cannot come, but that unless she is constantly repeating to herself that he is dead, she cannot realize it. I don't know that it ought to be difficult to us to understand her state of mind. There are a great many things which we know very well, and which we should never think of contradicting if we heard them asserted, but which we do not allow to influence our lives as we do the things of which we have *felt* the truth. And then don't you know what they say about people who have lost a limb and who go on trying to use it, stretching out the stump of an arm, from old habit, when they want to shake hands with a friend?"

"I suppose the cases are alike, but it had not struck me before," I said. "And perhaps it is best that she should not realize the loss all at once. Still it must be very pitiable."

"Oh, it is all pitiable—hopelessly pitiable," groaned Madeline. I did not attempt to offer comfort. I had none to give. Is it not one of the truths we must learn to recognize, that there will come

into life moments of supreme anguish — sorrows that are as far beyond relief as the physical sufferings in the presence of which medical science has over and over again to confess its impotence — as incapable of present cure as those social ulcers which eat into the heart of our national life? And this is no gospel of despair; there are ills that can be cured, there are many more that can be alleviated, and there is work for all of us to do. But the millennium is not at hand, and it is not more idle to delude ourselves with rose-coloured theories about universal happiness to be secured by this or that political nostrum than to hanker after a religion or a philosophy that shall remove the sting from death, while the curse of selfishness is still on life. There is such dearth of sympathy in the world — there are so few in whose light and goodness we can trust, that when one of these dies before his time, leaving us to tread alone the wine-press he has trodden with us, the world may well seem to us dark and empty for awhile. It is, perhaps, one of the greatest sins at our doors that we allow so many of our brothers and sisters to go hungry for human love, while we comfort ourselves with the sophism that they would never have been endowed with this strong yearning for sympathy if there was not One above who will satisfy it. We might as well tell the children starving in our streets that they would not be allowed to feel hungry if there were not manna from heaven for them to eat.

Then she talked to me of the strange loneliness she felt in this common sorrow — of the gulf of thought and experience unsuspected by all around her which seemed to cut her off from them, and of the effort it was to her to keep up the delusion under which they all were, that the loss was less to her than to his mother or his widow.

"Do not laugh at me," she said, "but I yearn so sometimes to be the one to be comforted and not the one to comfort, that I call old Rough up into my room and talk to him about my sorrow." I did not feel much inclined to laugh at her.

"And yet," she continued, "it is not so much that I want to talk about my feelings, as that I want to feel that there is some one near me who would understand me if I did speak. Not one of them guesses how great this loss is to me, and, Janet, when I say that it is a loss, I do not mean that it is a loss to me in the same way that it is to Grace, or as I once

thought it would be to me. It is not that. I have always been candid with you on this subject: I have confessed to you what I would confess to no one else; therefore you must believe me when I say that I have overcome that feeling — that it is dead and buried. But I have lost in Harry the one person I have ever known, with whose views and feelings I have felt such perfect sympathy wherever I could understand them, that I could trust him implicitly where I could not follow his thought. He was a living outward confirmation of all my inner life; he gave me a faith in myself that I can never have again. For there is no one now to bridge over for me the gaps in my knowledge and to encourage me when I am in despair. And I shall be in despair very often, only I shall not dare confess it because all around me — even you, Janet — will say that I am in despair because I *will* not seek comfort where alone it can be found."

Then I answered: "Madeline, I, at least, will never say that again. My own faith is very weak and uncertain, but I am weak myself, and I cannot do without it. I *dare* not face the great emptiness that you have found so horrible. It seems to me sometimes that we are on the same road, only that I advance more slowly than you do. Can we not walk together, leaning one on the other — comforting and being comforted in turn?"

I stayed a fortnight at the cottage, and during that time we had many talks together. On the last day of my visit we stood hand-in-hand by Harry's grave. There was as yet no stone upon it, and the few flowers, that loving hands had planted, drooped sadly. As I looked round at the many other graves with white headstones on which were written hopes of resurrection and immortality, I could not refrain from envying the friends of those who rested beneath them. There are moments when we would gladly be rid of our sad heritage of truth and progress, when we long to close our eyes against the light and live again among the undisturbed illusions of our childhood. It is not only in the dark that one may feel frightened and alone.

Madeline was the first to speak.

"Janet," she said, "you have done me good. Since you have been with me my thoughts have been less horrid, and I no longer fear so much the summer coming back with the birds and flowers." She paused a moment, and then went on musingly: "I have been thinking a great

deal about immortality; and somehow it seems to me that our friends do not quite die till we forget them. They are about us in some strange way, like a holy influence keeping us purer and calmer than we could be without them. It is only the useless, loveless lives that end in the grave; lives like Harry's are carried far on into the future by all who have known their goodness and their beauty."

"I do not think I quite understand you," I answered.

"And I do not know that I quite understand myself; but it will come clear by-and-by. I often think one's thoughts clear themselves best as one goes about one's work."

"But," I asked, "does this kind of immortality satisfy you?"

"One cannot be satisfied all at once," she answered; "but I believe it will in time."

"It is so misty—so unreal," I said. "I do not think it would ever satisfy me. I want something surer; and yet . . . Madeline, you are stronger than I am."

"If I am at all strong," she answered, "it is you who, in great part, have made me so. Since you have been with me I have ceased to feel the blank that was so terrible. I have learned that there is no blank where there is human sympathy. It is only isolation that is intolerable."

"But when I am gone and you are alone again, what will you do and what shall I do, for I shall be alone too? How is one to be guarded against isolation?"

"It ought not to be difficult," said Madeline. "Seeing that we live surrounded by crowds of fellow-creatures with much the same needs as ourselves, I think the wonder is that isolation should be possible at all."

"But if our fellow-creatures will not give us sympathy?"

"Then we must sympathize with them. When we feel that the alternative is to cry out for help and find there is none to hear, to beat our heads against a dead wall, to strain our eyes and yet never pierce the blank fog that surrounds us, I think we shall find some means of reaching the human hearts that are near us. Surely when we know we have nothing more than human help to look to, we shall cling more closely to one another as orphaned children do.—Oh, Janet, why talk of isolation? Is not this communion? Are we not three—you and I and Harry?"

As she said Harry's name her voice sank to a low whisper, and I felt a strange

thrill pass through me as though a current of enthusiasm had flowed from her to me through our linked hands. I could not answer, but it seemed to me that I prayed and that once more Madeline's passion was lifting me above myself.

After a moment's pause she went on. "And if isolation should come, ought we to shrink from it? Has not every faith had its martyrs? We are not likely to be tried by stakes and gibbets, but may it not well be that while in a spiritual solitude our convictions will be put to the strongest proof, it is there also that we shall best learn how great is man's need of the communion in which we believe?"

I left Endle Down the next day with confident anticipations of coming again soon and often. Nevertheless, it was five years before I saw Madeline again.

CHAPTER IX.

The essence of all beauty, I call love.

E. B. Browning.

It was five years before I saw her again, for soon after that visit my little pupil, whose health had always been delicate, grew so rapidly weaker and more ailing, that her father and mother were strongly urged by the physicians they consulted to take her abroad before the winter began. Fortunately, they were wealthy and free from those professional and business ties which make the search for health an impossibility to so many invalids. They tried one climate after another—the South of France, Rome, Madeira, and finally Egypt, and there, finding that in the warm, dry atmosphere the little girl grew stronger, we pitched our tent.

During the years of my absence I kept up a regular correspondence with Madeline. And from her letters I learned how by degrees the dark shadow that had fallen across her path had been dispelled; how the blank had been filled up by new interests and new work, and how all her life was ever more and more clearly illumined by the light of which we had watched the dawn together on that evening when we stood hand-in-hand by Harry's grave. She told me too, how Grace, rousing herself from the terrible lethargy into which she had sunk—as she awoke from the illusions that made her loss bearable in the days of its first freshness—had made a piteous appeal to her to help her with all her love and all her wisdom to bring up Harry's boy as Harry would himself have trained him, and how the com-

mon sorrow had proved a bond knitting them into a closer sisterhood than had been possible for the merely natural tie of blood between natures so diverse. "She came to me," Madeline had written, "one day in the library. I was reading a book that had belonged to Harry, and she recognized it as his. I do not know whether she had come in with the intention of asking what she did ask, or whether it was suggested to her by seeing me studying Harry's book. But she took my hand in hers and knelt by my side and said, 'Madeline, you must teach me to live and to teach little Harry to live. When I think of him I am in despair. It seemed easy enough to bring him up to be wise and good when I had Harry to help me. But now I am all at sea. I am very ignorant, and when I try to learn, I am bewildered with the quantity of things there are to be learned, and by all the different opinions about them. No two books agree. How am I to choose among them all? And yet I must choose, or how shall I teach my child? But I think if you would help me—you who think as Harry thought and who are so wise and clever—then, I think, between us we might train him so that if—oh, Madeline, for who can say that it is impossible?—if Harry can see and know what we are doing, he will be glad and approve.'"

"I have told you what she said, word for word, because I have sometimes thought that you do not do justice to Grace. You do not know—nobody can know who has not been constantly with her during the last two years—all her sweetness and goodness. When she was so happy that it would have been no wonder if she had been entirely self-absorbed, she was full of kind thoughts for others, and now in her sorrow she is so brave in her quiet gentle way, never bemoaning herself, but trying to do her duty, and to bear what seems unbearable. And then there is something very touching about her humility, and her trustfulness—indeed, it makes me feel quite ashamed when she appeals to me as so much wiser than herself, to me who am myself so pitifully ignorant. But it is very pleasant to me that she should wish to work with me, though it must be as a fellow-learner and not as a pupil. And so we are making great plans about all that we will learn and read together, that we may be able to teach little Harry as he grows older." I am afraid it was not without a pang of jealousy that I read this letter.

Madeline was the one person in the world why had ever seemed to want me very much. With all but her I had been accustomed to feel myself an outsider—one to whom people were kind, but whom they could do well enough without. And now I feared that she, in this close communion with her sister, would also learn to do without me, and that when I saw her again I should find her life had grown complete, and that there would be no corner in it left for me. She would still be kind to me, she would still be interested in all that touched me, but she would never say again, "Janet, you have done me good; there is no black now." But her letters were as frequent as ever, as affectionate and unreserved, and I grew reassured.

Still, when I found myself once more on my way to Endle Down, I could not help the old doubt coming back, and as I drove from the station I found myself growing nervous and shy, as I never could have believed I could have felt at the prospect of seeing again the Barnards and the Raymonds. Suddenly the carriage stopped. I was at the lodge. My heart beat fast, and my eyes grew dim as I drove up the avenue and all the past rushed over me. I looked out. Yes, there they were, watching for me under the trees. Grace, with a little fair-haired boy clinging to her skirts and laughing and talking eagerly, and Madeline, all sunshine and content, holding out both her hands and saying, "Oh, Janet, Janet, we have wanted you so much." Then there is much hand-pressing and kissing, and many broken exclamations, questions and answers, as we try to squeeze into five minutes the events and feelings of five years. There is no need to doubt my welcome. Indeed there is not time for it.

Madeline has kept me well informed of all that has happened, but as I stand again on the dear old terrace the five years seem blotted out, and my mind is a strange jumble of then and now. I know that Sir Thomas is gone, and that the little boy before me is called Sir Harry Raymond. I know that Lady Raymond has become infirm, and seldom leaves her sofa, except to be drawn about in a Bath chair. But how can I realize it? How, above all, if it were not for Grace's black dress and widow's cap, could I believe that he who was the light and the life of the house will not come soon and stretch out both his hands in kindly welcome? Is it all a dream?

Then Madeline says, "You must come in and see the mothers," and we go into the house—little Harry running before us and bursting open the drawing-room door to announce that Janet has come. Dear old Lady Raymond, she is lying on the sofa and knitting grey socks as of old, only they are *little* socks now for *little* Harry; but the knitting falls from her hands as I come in, and she spreads out her arms to welcome me. The tears come into her eyes, and she cannot speak. The past is present to her too, and she can only press me to her lovingly. It is almost a relief to hear Mrs. Barnard's quiet, ladylike voice saying how glad she is to see me again. One lives to be thankful that there are some people in the world whose feelings are not too deep for calmness and propriety. Life were otherwise too intense to last out even the short span allotted to it.

Mrs. Barnard helps us to talk. She asks the right questions about Egypt—about the inundations and the climate, the pyramids and the sphinxes—she wonders whether I shall know the younger children, and whether I have heard of Jack's scholarship at Eton, and of all the little family incidents that fill up the years I have been away—whether Madeline has told me of George Henderson's marriage, and whether I shall like his wife. And while she talks, things disentangle themselves in my mind, and I feel less afraid of asking wrong questions.

"Come into the garden, Janet," Madeline says after a while; "there is time for a stroll before dinner."

We go out through the open window, across the sun-lit lawn into the quiet shrubbery. And, as we wander arm-in-arm among the trees, Madeline tells me, bit by bit, over again, all the story of her life since last we were together.

The sun is going down in a golden glory, the air is laden with the scent of roses, the haymakers are busy in the field turning over the swathes of fresh green grass, there is an atmosphere around us of richness and content, and I am not afraid as I look into Madeline's eyes to ask if she is quite happy.

"Indeed I am," she answers; "how happy it will take me a long time to tell you, for my life is very full." And then drawing me closer to her, she adds very sweetly, "But not so full, dear, that there is not room for you in it."

We linger a little longer among the roses and the flower-beds, till we see Grace coming across the lawn to summon

us to dinner. She is leading little Harry by the hand, and as she bends down to talk to him, she seems to me like the guardian angels the old painters loved to paint, for her white cap glistens like an aureole, and the sunlight, falling on her black drapery, has made a radiance of its gloom.

And Madeline says, as we watch her coming:

"Confess now that there is some good in being very beautiful."

"When did I ever say that there was not?" I answer.

"You never said it, but in the old days I used to think that you never quite forgave Grace for being beautiful."

And I answer: "I could not forgive her for being *only* beautiful and leaving all the work to you."

"You did not know," said Madeline, "how much easier it was to do the work when she made an atmosphere of beauty in the house."

We hear much in these days of the power of beauty to purify our lives, of art as the great lever that is to lift us to the far-off heights on which we hope to realize our ideals; and now and then we hear austere voices crying to us that this is no time for lingering in pleasant places, that we must toil on without resting, content that, through our efforts, others will sooner reach the goal. All honour to the brave spirits who can keep ever before them the glory of the far-off hill-tops, in whom faith in the ideal burns with so steady a flame that they need not to rekindle it by contact with actual beauties by the wayside. All honour to these, but to most of us the hill-sides seem very steep, and our faith is weak and our sight short, and so let thanks be given for our goodly company of artists—poets, painters and musicians—who, if they cannot give us mighty harmonies like those which found an echo in the hearts of more harmonious times, do at least give us tuneful melodies which are as fragments of the complete beauty after which we yearn—and, above all, let there be thanks for every gentle life in which we may see our ideal shadowed forth. The hill-tops are very far away, far away from us who have climbed many days to reach them, far away from the sheltered valleys where our little ones are playing. Far, and yet not so far from there, while the valleys are still watered by pleasant singing streams and silent lakes; for the children, as they bend over

them to see their own smiles and tears reflected in the waters, may find that the hill-tops are there too. But, alas, there are other streams that fret and fume so that the reflection is a broken and unmeaning picture, and there are pools so foul and muddy that the children, looking into them, see only a distorted image of themselves. By-and-by the children must leave the valleys, and begin to scale the mountain sides; whether they have courage to climb on till they reach the hill-tops, or indeed, whether they know that there are any hill-tops to be reached at all, will depend, I think, not a little on how much they have learnt to love them while they yet lie mirrored at their feet.

From Fraser's Magazine.

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF MOHAMMED.*

THIS little book contains a great mass of matter, and is very timely. It is calculated to teach Englishmen to look with new eyes upon the Mussulman nations. In general we either do not know, or we forget, that Mussulman may differ from Mussulman, as much as Christian from Christian, and that the schools of learning among them are as various and as much in mutual contrast as the doctrines of the Sorbonne or the Lateran to those of Oxford or Geneva. The writer avoids, perhaps skilfully avoids, to show us what Mohammedans are, but in his own person he shows what they may be. Probably he will convince few of us that Islâm has been so great a blessing to the world as he thinks, but he displays most interestingly that a love of righteousness and largeness of heart is compatible with the profession of his creed. He may, or he may not, succeed in satisfying us that his Prophet is clear of the imputations eagerly and sternly urged against him by Western critics; but it remains an interesting fact, that his disciples can hold up before their eyes for reverence not a sensual and sanguinary hero, but a self-denying, generous, wise, merciful, and gentle ruler, who gave to his disciples such precepts as alone were practicable in that rude state, and guided his own conduct in submission to the necessities of that state. Syed Ameer Ali claims for

the Prophet nothing of omniscience or prescience: he has not to maintain that his conduct or any precepts of detail are a law to the human race. Thus a considerable latitude is allowed, without compromising his sincere allegiance. Indeed, his devout enthusiasm leaves no room for Mussulmans of another school to call him lukewarm.

It may be as well to begin by noticing the different schools of thought within Islâm, as stated by our author (chapter xvii.). He adduces the rise of religious and moral speculation from this era, as one mark of the great inward change which Mohammed wrought in the Arabs in twenty years' time.

Nothing better exemplifies (says he) the character of these twenty years, or the spirit of freedom preserved in the teachings of Islâm than the following tradition:—Mohammed, whilst deputed Sâd Ibn Muâdh as a delegate to some tribe, asked him how he would judge between contending parties, if they came to him for a decision. Sâd replied: "First I will look to the Korân, then to precedents of the Prophet, and lastly, rely upon my own judgment."

Ali, son-in-law of the Prophet, was (for an Arab) a great student, and, it is said, a man of sweet, calm mind. On becoming the Fourth Khalif (or Successor) to the Prophet, much was to be hoped from his wisdom and gentleness. Mohammed himself had been illiterate, but, according to our author, was a warm panegyrist of learning. His son-in-law and beloved disciple had been preparing himself to carry out the Prophet's own earnest desires: but he was assassinated with his two sons. The dynasty of the Omniades which followed, ushered in, by treachery and intrigue, stormy reigns, with severe trial to the surviving descendants of the Prophet. During the life of misery and unhappiness they sought consolation in intellectual pursuits. Thus was born the religious philosophy of Islâm, which under the Khalifs of Bagdad united itself to all the knowledge accessible in that age:

The high position assigned by the Prophet to science and philosophy, and the devotion of his early descendants to every branch of intellectual pursuit, had led to the rapid development of *intellectual liberty* among the Moslems. — P. 293.

The latitude of private judgment which Islâm allowed to its followers took varied shape at different times and in different individuals. — P. 299.

Predestination and free will were of course eagerly debated. Wâsil ben Atâ

* *A Critical Examination of the Life and Teachings of Mohammed.* By Syed Ameer Ali, Moulvi, M.A., LL.B., of the Inner Temple, Barrister-at-Law, &c., &c.

formed a school of Seceders (*Mutazalas*), whom we may term Rationalists; since they teach that all knowledge is attained through Reason, and must necessarily be so attained; that therefore the discrimination of good and evil is within the Province of Reason; that nothing is known to be wrong or right until Reason has distinguished them; that man has perfect freedom, is the author of his own actions both good and evil, and deserves reward or punishment accordingly. They uphold the unity and the justice of God; teach that the tendency of actions to the happiness of the many is a good criterion of Right, and that in the very long abode of man on this earth a great development has taken place in his relations and consequently in the laws which regulate them. Syed Ameer Ali esteems a work of this school, which is called "Gifts of the Brothers of Purity," to be a master-piece of its kind, especially as to its earnest faith in the progress of man, and in its universal charity, embracing even the brute creation.

Our readers must be well aware how intensely opposite are other Moslem schools. We cannot mistake in judging Syed Ameer Ali to be himself a *Mutazala*. He remarks that the Shīas (or Persian "heretics") tend to these views; but the Persians are very often mystics who find an esoteric or deeper sense in the words of the Korān. Syed Ameer Ali does not impute this to any desire of escaping the obvious sense, but to a profound belief that something nobler lay hid. He justifies this by the following mystical paraphrase of a part of the first chapter of the Korān:

Guide Thou, O Lord! on the straight path. Guide us in the way which will lead to Thee, and bless us with Thy love, which is Thy essence. Free us from everything which may keep us back from Thee. Direct us in the way in which we may see none but Thee, hear none but Thee, love none but Thee. — P. 311.

This mysticism our author holds to be pure, beautiful, and very noble in the higher minds, but to confuse and unnerve the vulgar, and even to unsettle morality, of which it sets forth Love alone as the basis. This will suffice to show the immense latitude of thought and belief which we may expect in the Moslem world.

As to Syed Ameer Ali himself it is well to state that he has recently made a long abode in England, and become a Barrister of the Inner Temple, and is also a

member of the Royal Asiatic Society. On his return to India he was welcomed at a public dinner, and responded in a speech of warm gratitude for English hospitality and our easy admission of him to our social circles, adding his earnest loyalty to English rule in India. Of course, as a Moslem, he has complaints of his own against us, and as a patriotic Indian he does not wish things *forever* to remain as they are. We see how in China or Japan Christian Governments hold together in a common policy, however keen may be their rivalries in Europe. The same phenomenon must be expected from Moslems in Asia. We are not exhorting our readers to expect that the enlightenment of such men as Syed Ameer Ali (even though their absolute number be considerable) can sensibly affect the collective conduct of Indian, any more than of Turkish, Mohammedans. Rather we must anticipate that at every important crisis, whatever their diversity of school, they will throw their entire weight into one policy, and that will be the policy of the most ambitious. But we are not writing on politics, and make the remark only to prevent misapprehension. We may now return to the purely philosophic consideration of Syed Ameer Ali himself and his representation of Mohammed.

A large part of his representation is derived from the *traditions*, and it is very hard for a Western reader to judge what weight is due to these. Our principal clue is to observe what measures of belief they receive from those Christian writers whose learning and capacity are respected, and especially such writers as are severe censors of Mohammed. Such is Sir William Muir. Our author quotes freely from Deutsch's Essay on Islām [*Quarterly Review*, No. 254], in which a much warmer and higher estimate of the Prophet is given; but, indeed, it is startling to read some of Muir's paragraphs here quoted. Such are the following:—

From time beyond memory Mecca and the whole peninsula had been steeped in spiritual torpor. The slight and transient influences of Judaism, Christianity, or philosophy upon the Arab mind had been but as the ruffling here and there of the surface of a quiet lake: all remained still and motionless below. The people were sunk in superstition, cruelty and vice. It was a common practice for the eldest son to marry his father's widows, inherited as *property* with the rest of the estate. Pride had introduced among them, as it has among the Hindoos, the crime of female infanticide. . . .

The contrast is stated by him thus :

Never since the days when primitive Christianity first startled the world from its sleep, and waged a mortal conflict with heathenism, had men seen the like arousing of spiritual life, the like faith that suffered sacrifice and took joyfully the spoiling of goods for conscience' sake. — Muir, vol. ii., pp. 270, 269.

Muir states in his preface that his work was undertaken to help a Christian missionary in controversy with the Moslems ; hence Syed Ameer Ali has a right to press such concessions as extorted by truth. But the outside public does not get all the light that is to be wished. Muir follows the Moslem authors Wākadi and his kâtib (writer), who are of little weight (says Syed Ameer Ali) with Ibn Khallicân. Syed Ameer Ali follows Ibn Hishâm and Ibn al Athîr, of whom the former is undervalued by Muir. But this does not tell us how far distant in time the writers were from Mohammed, and what were their sources of information. The "extensive erudition" which Syed Ameer Ali ascribes to Ibn al Athîr suggests that he may have written a century and a half or two centuries after the events, and the "chaste elegance of his style" cannot make him more trustworthy. Pious reverence may invest one seen in dim distance with a soft splendour, of which no trace was visible to an eyewitness. While we find it hard to know what traditions are true, and what are the imaginative fictions of devout affection, yet it is wholesome for Moslems to believe everything good and pure concerning their Prophet. What is the truth of facts when there is any grave difference between learned inquirers it is not for us to settle. But the chief difference here seems to be as to colouring and imputation of motives ; and when nothing supernatural is claimed by the panegyrist, it is not any great strain of charity to accept the more honourable interpretation, especially when the general result of a life is conceded to be grand and spiritually efficacious.

Indeed, it suffices here to adopt as our *fact* for meditation and comment not what Mohammed exactly *was* and what he taught, but what it is possible for a sincere follower to *believe* concerning his life and doctrine ; and looking at it from that side, we find much that is highly interesting. If all Moslems believed concerning their Prophet what Syed Ameer Ali believes, it would be to most of them a mental enlargement and elevation, and

would bring the highest Moslem and the highest Christian morality and aspirations into very close approximation. We must awhile pursue and develope this thought.

The author undoubtedly has a right to claim that we shall judge of Mohammed and his institutions with reference to the state of society into which he was born. His problem was to improve what existed. Like Moses, he had refractory materials to deal with : and if he brought in signal reforms, that suffices for his honour, without contending that his precepts were perfect. A summary of the new precepts are put into the mouth of Jâfar, a nephew of the Prophet, acting as spokesman for the first body of emigrants, in the 5th year of Mohammed's mission (A.C. 615).

O king, we were plunged in the depth of ignorance and barbarism. We adored idols, we ate dead bodies, and we spoke abominations. We disregarded every feeling of humanity and the duties of hospitality and neighborhood. We knew no law but that of the strong, when God raised among us a man, of whose birth, truthfulness, honesty, and purity we were aware ; and he called us to the Unity of God, and taught us not to associate anything with Him. He forbade us the worship of idols, and enjoined us to speak the truth, to be faithful to our trusts, to be merciful, and to regard the rights of neighbours. He forbade us to speak evil of women or to eat the substance of orphans. He ordered us to flee from vices and to abstain from evil, to offer prayers, to render alms, to observe the fast.

It surely is matter of rejoicing that a body of religionists should base reverence for their Prophet on grounds such as these. But we must go to details. First, as to the matter of *Slavery*. In Arabia, or elsewhere, slavery had its origin in war. Captives of war, when not slain, are a great embarrassment in a poor country and to a migrating people. To imprison and feed them at Government expense belongs to a later civilization. Nothing at that time was possible but to exact of the captive that he should earn his food by his labour, and his captor necessarily became the overseer of that labour ; so that he was a temporary slave, but with the hope of being ransomed. The ransom was the right of the captor. Such an institution could not be extirpated by Mohammed except by the sanguinary precept of taking no prisoners, but killing all who were overpowered, which mercy, prudence, and

avarice conspired to forbid. But Syed Ameer Ali claims that his Prophet did all that could be done to prevent the evil of slavery from going further, and deliberately made enactments to favour emancipation. He insists that the Prophet's phrase for slaves, "those whom your *right hands* have become possessed of" (have earned or won), was intended to restrict the means of acquiring them to *bonâ fide* legal warfare. Mohammed (he says) enjoined that the slave be held only until ransomed, or until he had bought his liberty by the wages of service. Slave-dealing was utterly reprobated. The slave-dealer (tradition said) was declared by the Prophet to be the outcast of humanity. Enfranchisement of slaves was praised as the noblest act of virtue, and onerous responsibilities were attached to the possession of a slave, which often led to enfranchisement. According to Ibn Hishâm, in nearly his last public discourse Mohammed proclaimed: "As for your slaves, see that ye feed them with such food as ye eat yourselves, and clothe them with the stuff ye wear: and if they commit a fault which ye are not inclined to forgive, then *part from them*; for they are the *servants of the Lord*, and are not to be harshly treated." Syed Ameer Ali asserts that Mohammed's precepts did more against slavery than can be claimed for any other legislator. Among the commands of the Prophet he quotes that for certain sins of omission the penalty should be the manumission of slaves; that a slave should be allowed to buy his freedom, and with a view to gainful employment be permitted to leave his master's service; that sums from the public treasury should be advanced to them in the same cause; and any promise on the part of the master was held obligatory for enfranchisement. His precepts were directed to enforce the duties of the strong to the weak, forbidding the masters to exact excessive work. Above all, it was ordered that a mother should never be separated from the child, brother from brother, or father from son, nor any relative from another. Our author remarks that no such care for slaves was ever bestowed by Christian teachers. Of course he has to confess that the practice of Moslems has widely deviated from the precepts of the legislator, but unhappily Christians cannot afford to throw the stone at them for this. The wild Turkomân (says he) who glories in slave-lifting, is no more a representative

of Islâm than is the barbarous Guacho, who revels on the savage prairies of South America, of Christianity. We must quote his appeal to his co-religionists on this subject:

The time is now arrived when humanity at large should raise its voice against the practice of servitude, in whatever shape or under whatever denomination it may be disguised. The Moslems especially, for the honour of their noble Prophet, should try to efface that dark page from their history—a page which would never have been written but for their contravention of the spirit of his laws. . . . The day is come when the voice which proclaimed liberty, equality, and universal brotherhood among all mankind should be heard with the fresh vigour acquired from the spiritual existence and spiritual pervasion of thirteen centuries. It remains for the Moslems to show the falseness of the aspersions cast on the great and noble Prophet by proclaiming in explicit terms that Slavery is reprobated by their faith and discountenanced by their code. So will they add to their glory and his, and to the glory (if human lips can pronounce it) of that Eternal Being who endowed the legislator with the genius to evolve such laws of wisdom.

The Prophet proclaimed "equality and universal brotherhood *among all mankind*." This is very new doctrine to most of us. Whether it is historically true or not, we are delighted to hear a Moslem assert it. Indeed, a pleasing illustration of the good feeling *possible* between Hindoo and Mohammedan was exhibited at a recent meeting of the National Indian Association, in Adam Street, Adelphi, when Krishna Govinda Gupta of Bengal delivered a lecture on the Two Races of India. He was very severe on the "fanaticism" and sanguinary violence of the Mohammedans in the past; yet he spoke hopefully of new relations, in which they would "dine together and intermarry," and become one nation. A Moslem gentleman from Bombay (Meer Hakim) "corroborated all that had been said by the lecturer," and added that "England ought not to *fear* a coalition of the races;" by which he meant to imply that the coalition was possible. Another Hindoo gentleman continued in the same strain, urging that such coalition was desirable, and that "Theism would unite them in one faith." We decline ill-omened comments, and cherishing the best wishes, return from the digression to Syed Ameer Ali's representation of the Prophet's doctrine concerning *Woman*.

Polygamy existed in Arabia before the time of Mohammed, as might have been

conjectured from the neighbouring nations and the state of social life. Between small hostile tribes the loss of male life in wars is very great; women, in consequence, far outnumber men; young women, in a roving people, have little safety but in marriage, and little power of maintaining themselves. Polygamy, therefore, is incident to such barbarism. It was unlimited before Mohammed. He limited the number of wives to four, commanded perfect equality towards these, and defined their rights against the husband. The laws which he delivered concerning divorce, and concerning the rights and property of wives, were far in advance of any accepted in Europe for ages afterwards. Where the circumstances of a nation change, polygamy, of course, tends to die out, as it did with the Jews. Our author informs us that in the northwest of India nineteen Moslems out of twenty are monogamists, and that it is common for the kinsman of a bride to exact of a bridegroom signature to a document by which he is liable to a payment wholly ruinous and beyond his means if he take a second wife. On her own domain the wife is mistress, and (according to our author) may *chain out* her husband if he be too late of a night in coming home!

But the imputation lies on the Prophet of exceeding his own limitation, and Christians have been prone to ascribe this to sensuality. Of course this is strongly resented. Our readers will probably agree with us that our author very decisively refutes this accusation, which is the fruit of our ignorance. He observes that Mohammed at the age of twenty-five was courted by a kinswoman much older than himself, the celebrated Khadija, and lived in the most undisturbed and amiable harmony with her till her death, twenty-five years later. No whisper of calumny is breathed against his conduct in this long period, during which he had one wife, and her not young. The successive marriages which he contracted when he was past fifty were (all but one) with *widows*, and most of them are referable to pity at their destitute condition when their husbands fell in the Prophet's cause, and he had no other way to protect them. (In a polygamic country, we suppose, it is no more respectable for a woman to live in the house of a married man than here in the house of a bachelor.) Two or three of these marriages are explicable from policy, and actually (according to our author) one of them

gained the release of a hundred captives of war. It is not for us to explain such details; but a man immersed in religious and political cares, who from youth has been a spiritual enthusiast, and has lived in unblamable domestic affection until his fifty-first year, does not easily become a sensualist; and surely every Christian ought to rejoice that Moslems explain quite otherwise the conduct of him whom they venerate. The poverty of the times was such that, according to Sir W. Muir, Mohammed "shared his food, even in times of scarcity, with others, being sedulously solicitous for the personal comfort of every one about him." This at once explains (what may occur to none of us) why he had no way of providing for a friend's widow out of public resources. The very scanty stores of food raised by a people in that state are wastefully consumed when wars arise.

This leads to a new topic, the *Wars of Mohammed*. Syed Ameer Ali must on this matter be allowed to state his own view, which, we fear, is not widely shared by his co-religionists. He insists that the wars were all defensive, and that the Prophet condemned aggressive war. He claims, fairly enough, that from the time that he was elected to be Chief of a State his political conduct shall be compared with that of men who have political responsibilities, not with the conduct of prophets and sages who have no political character at all. In this only right comparison, he maintains, his Prophet displays a great pre-eminence. He entered battle personally, in order to encourage his followers, but carried no weapon of war. He forbade the slaughter of non-belligerents, the burning of cornfields, and the cutting down of fruit trees; cruelty to prisoners, or mutilation of the dead; practices from which his adversaries did not abstain. When his followers were martyred, or threatened with death for their religion — when his ambassadors were killed — he was, like other chiefs of nations, drawn into inevitable war; but he did not prolong war through ambition, but made peace as soon as it could give a hope of permanence. Sir W. Muir asserts that to the permanence of Islâm a continuous aggressive course was essential, and that its claim to *universal supremacy* could only be enforced at the point of the sword. Syed Ameer Ali insists that this ambition has no justification from the Prophet, but has its parallel in all other creeds, whose professors have been per-

secuting and aggressive. He asserts that Islām has not been *more* aggressive than the votaries of other creeds; and, in spite of the ferocious barbarism of African Mussulmans, we do not see that his assertion can be rebutted. But his own co-religionist Syed Ahmed Khan (he says) seems to admit that Mohammedanism grasped the sword to proclaim the eternal truth—the Unity of the God-head—which Syed Ameer Ali totally denies; but adds, “Islām never interfered with the dogmas of any *moral* faith,” which may seem to leave a loophole. He finds it very easy to recriminate on Christendom for its wars of religion and frightful persecutions both of other Christians and of innocent foreigners; but he has a difficult task in denying that the Prophet proclaimed war against idolaters *as such*. Indeed, of two passages quoted by our author from the Korān one seems to go against him. The former is (p. 198), “Defend yourself against your enemies in the war of enterprise for the Religion, but attack them not: God hateth the aggressor.” The other (p. 210), “Fight for the religion of God against those who fight against you; but transgress not (by attacking them first); for God loveth not the transgressors. If they attack you, slay them; but if they desist, let there be no hostility, *except against the ungodly*.”

It must be received as historical and is admitted by Christian opponents of Mohammed, that in his age the idolatry of Arabs was coupled with impure doctrines and lascivious practices; of which sufficient hint is given us in the classical religions of Syria and of Babylon, to say nothing of more distant Greece. No wise Christian ruler would allow such impurities, under cover of a religious name, to propagate themselves over the area which he controlled; and the line which separates this conduct from that of warring from Jerusalem to suppress impure idolatry in Samaria, or warring from Medina to suppress it in Mecca, is certainly very delicate. *Our* reason for sternly prohibiting wars to suppress moral impurities which are beyond our own frontier is not that it is wrong to suppress them by violence, for it is well that they should be so suppressed by authorities on the spot. But experience tells us that ambition will never want specious pretexts for aggression, if one power is thus to interfere on the area of another. The moral state of the two never with us differs so gravely but that the demoral-

ization incident to war is a remedy worse than the disease. But in an extreme case, where inhumanity and impurity were installed into the high places of national honour, such a people would seem to put itself out of the pale of diplomacy, and a neighbour powerful enough to crush the moral mischief without permanent evil from the war would probably be applauded in the deed. It is, perhaps, fair to view Mohammed's war upon Arabian idolatry in this light, especially since the consolidation of tribes extirpated border war, and was all on the side of humanity. It may be hard by any mere reasoning to hinder an undue extension of the precedent; probably impossible, while a Mussulman power is confronted by no equal rival: and the same may be said of all nations, whatever their creed. None have been virtuous enough to be able to dispense with that wholesome restraint of equals which Thucydides quaintly describes as *ισοπαλὲς δέος*.

When the Khalifs were once launched on a victorious career, backed by armies full of enthusiasm and mutual trust, veterans in war, they must have been wiser and better than men, had they not been carried into unlimited aggression. The English merchants in India were entangled, at first greatly against their will, in wars purely defensive; but after full experience of their own military superiority, their actual leaders courted fresh combats, and precisely when native princes did not want to fight they in turn found war to be inevitable. It is thus that uniform success prompts ambition, and drives into systematic aggression the power which at first desired nothing but defence. When it has been thus with Christians, and is not held to stain the sanctity of the religion itself, justice requires that we judge in the same way of Islām.

Not but that it is an unhappy phenomenon that the warlike and aggressive conduct of Islām stands in direct connection of time and space with the career of its founder, so as to appear as a legitimate carrying on of his principles and practice. No Christian aggressors can fancy that they are obeying the precepts of Jesus in invading their neighbours. A Mussulman power has (if possible) still more need than we of external restraints; which, however, are abundantly supplied now in Asia. Only in Africa is Mohammedan fanaticism rampant. Alike the Ottomans, the Persians, and the Indian Moslems have forcible teachers from

without, who will strengthen the hands of such mild interpreters as Syed Ameer Ali and Syed Ahmed Khan: and (in the cause of humanity let us hope!) will postpone, until it becomes impossible, the warlike struggle of Cross and Crescent.

This little book may be read with much pleasure. The author is a young man, and his mind has travelled over a great surface of history and philosophy. He has tried to get at the best authorities and the most novel learning. It is only to be expected that his versions of Western history do not always commend themselves to us. This remark does not bear upon his severe and caustic lashing of Christian powers and Christian churches for their enormous and habitual violation of the first principles taught by their Founder. Christians are so accustomed to be thus attacked by Christians that it seems to do them no good; when the same attack comes from a Mohammedan, or Hindoo, we may hope for some result. But there is an air of omniscience in his broad treatment, which neither pleases nor convinces us, in dealing with ages most imperfectly known. Nations were not so wholly miserable nor so wholly wicked as they seem in retrospect. When he speaks of the Persians (page 9) he strangely identifies "Ardishir Babekân, founder of the Sassanid dynasty," with Artaxerxes Longimanus, of the Achæmenian dynasty; and presently (apparently still speaking of the Sassanidæ) he says that Bahman Ardishir was Artaxerxes Mnemon, quoting *Arabian authorities* for it in his note, where he adds, "Artaxerxes Mnemon was the brother of Cyrus the younger, the hero of Xenophon." The modern Persians, and naturally such Arabians as depend on them, are utterly in the dark as to the Achæmenian dynasty, and, as Sir John Malcolm remarks, equally of the Sassanidæ; but our author is in general very attentive to chronology.

Our readers will take interest in knowing what he regards to have been "the Three Great Evils which have befallen humanity." The *third* was the victory of Charles Martel in the week-long battles around Tours over the invading Moors of Spain. He can eloquently recount the enormities of the Spanish Inquisition, and of the Spaniards in the New World and in the far East, and claims for the Moors that they have been the truest and mildest civilizers of Spain. The *second* calamity is the unsuccessful

siege of Constantinople by the Saracens in the eighth century. Its failure made the Crusades possible, continued the moral and religious downfall of the Greek empire, and delayed the religious reform of the Christian Church by centuries. It is instructive to hear a Moslem comment on these matters, and we cannot wonder that he should regard the military defeats of Islâm as pure disaster to humanity. But what (it will be asked) was the *first* calamity? Had we had to guess, we might have said, He must mean the success of *Tartar* nations, a comparatively stolid race, against the more intelligent Arabs. Syed Ameer Ali *must* have some hypothesis to account for the decline of Moslem powers: he does not explain himself on this; perhaps he is unwilling to affront the Turks—but no: the first calamity is the repulse of Xerxes by the Greeks. He is blind to that which to us is an axiom, that this repulse quickened into genius all the slumbering faculties of Athens, and made Greece the intellectual teacher of Europe, and indeed (as to astronomy and metaphysics) of Arabia. Had Xerxes prevailed, Athens would never have surpassed Miletus. Greek degeneracy would have come centuries earlier. Nay, but he tells us, "Had Persia succeeded in amalgamating Greece with herself, the *result* only partially attained by the Hellenic upheaval under Alexander would have been attained centuries [one century and a half?] earlier." But *what* result? Alexander's conquest of Persia struck the knell to all genius in Greece. It cast her under despotism and mercenary armies. The military quarrels which followed his death did allow flickerings of freedom in Greece; but, alike to Greece or to Asia, it seems obvious and certain that the mischief of Alexander's career consisted in its being a virtual conquest of Greece by Asia; for the vast resources of Asia were used by Macedonian captains, ignorant and careless of Greek freedom and Greek culture, to subdue Hellenism in its own home. If Asia had been acquired in the course of three or four generations by a series of Macedonian aggressions, such as a cautious Philip would have made, Greek freedom, possibly, might have accompanied it: then Greece would really have conquered Persia. But the contrary was the case. Poor Greece, crushed by the Macedonian incubus, and unable to resist her own ruder tribes, declined and wasted, till nothing was left her but the misery of absorption into Rome. When

Syed Ameer Ali takes so black a view of Persia before the era of Islâm, we are truly astonished at his lamentations over the repulse of the Persian arms.

Perhaps this notice ought not to close without an allusion to the view of Mohammed often taken by Christians who learn history through an ecclesiastical medium. Many are shocked at Mohammed as elevating himself above Christ, and on this ground call him emphatically *Antichrist*. But they either do not know or forget that Mohammed could not read. He knew nothing of Christianity but from the very unsatisfactory specimens of Christian professors and Christian doctrine which met him in Arabia. It was hard for him to discriminate a Trinity from Tritheism, and of Jesus he probably had received only the cloudiest report. The reverence which all Moslems have always had for the Christian Prophet (which our author fully shares) can only be an echo of Mohammed's own sentiment. Nothing appears to show that Mohammed consciously elevated himself against or above Jesus any more than Isaiah against or above David.

F. W. NEWMAN.

From Saint Pauls.

A HIMALAYAN COURTSHIP.

PART II.

PERHAPS Mrs. Day detected the iniquitude of the girl's mind, and spoke to her husband on the subject.

"A little courting will put that to rights," was his comment; "but Jack is such a lout, he doesn't go the right way to work."

"Jack," he said, as he and his son strolled over to the Tea Godown, "when are you and Frances going to understand each other?"

"Oh!" said Jack, grumpily, "she's too fine for me."

"Pooh! her fine clothes will wear out soon enough, and then she'll perhaps follow your mother's example, and wear yours out for you, if you like your mother's style best."

"I don't mean that, but—she'd be moped to death here."

"Fiddlestick—she can't get into mischief then; but I can't have any shilly-shallying—take her, and be thankful she is as she is."

"Perhaps she won't take me."

"Perhaps she won't take you—chicken-hearted fellow you are! I never saw the woman yet who would refuse a good husband for no reason. Pray, what could she object to?—you are as well born and better off than she is. What would she have more?"

His father's sneering repetition of his own words annoyed John, and decoyed him into telling his cousin's secret.

"But if she knows some one else she means to have?" he cried, impatiently.

Captain Day stood still and faced his son in sudden amazement.

"Some one else," he again repeated. Then, laughing derisively, he added, "Oh! some small boy partner at a dancing school,—the girl has seen no one else."

"She has, father,—a fellow who came out with her, and she has promised to marry him."

The Captain had a long iron-tipped bamboo in his hand, and he struck it far into the ground as his son spoke.

"Then I tell you, John," he exclaimed, "she'll never get my consent; the business would be half ruined without her money. I'll never give my consent, and—you are a fool, sir, if you can't cut the presuming puppy out. I don't want to be harsh. I'm saying what I would say if she were my own child. She shan't marry a fellow no one ever heard of; she shall marry you!"

John told his father all he knew concerning his rival, and, as it happened, the Captain had heard the young man spoken of when he was last in civilized regions.

"He is a good-looking, penniless sub," he said; "she shan't have him. If *you will, you shall*."

Father and son had lived so long amongst the natives they had imbibed native views respecting womenkind. Woman was a little above a commodity in their estimation, rather better than a pet animal, but decidedly inferior in every respect to themselves; a little coercion, especially if it was for her good, was therefore allowable.

John felt comforted by having made a confidant of his father.

When Mrs. Day was told of "Frances's folly," as the Captain called it, she merely laughed. She, with her husband, firmly believed John as nearly perfect as a young man could be. If Frances was a silly girl, blind to her own interests, why then it was her guardian's duty to insist on her choosing the right thing.

"Poor young thing," said Mrs. Day, "she'll thank us for keeping her straight when she's old enough to appreciate sterling qualities."

So it was understood by all three that in forcing a husband of their own choice upon the young lady they would act righteously.

For some time Frances did not know how she had been betrayed. It was during John's absence at another tea-garden belonging to the estate that she was made aware of her guardian's knowledge of that fact.

The Captain had always treated her with kind politeness, and though she continued to have a girlish dread of him in his character of guardian, they had always been on excellent terms. She was his "dear little girl," his "little partner," and he always gave her his arm in to dinner, and behaved to her at table as to a guest; so she was totally unprepared when, as they were sitting together after dinner under the verandah, he said, apropos of nothing—

"I hope there is no truth in the report of your entanglement with a beardless subaltern!"

"What, uncle!" she exclaimed breathlessly.

He slowly repeated the question.

His tone was so full of contempt and menace that the girl's heart almost stopped beating. There was no light but starlight over the dim silent landscape before them, so she could not see his face, but his voice was sufficient to frighten the foolish girl who had been so brave and bold in avowing her love to John, and only thinking of the present, indeed hardly knowing what she said until the word was spoken, she faltered "No."

"Ah!" he answered, "I was sure you would do nothing so foolish, not to say unladylike, as to take up with the first boy who had the impertinence to consider himself a match for such a girl as you. You know I was in the army, and I know how these young fellows esteem themselves, as if the gold lace on their clothes was an ample equivalent for the gold in a woman's purse—parcel of empty-headed noodles, most of them are. Well, then, having your assurance, I am content not to enquire further into the matter, though, perhaps, as your sole guardian I ought to sift it and make the young braggart eat his words."

"Oh, no, uncle," she interrupted, her head turning giddy at the sense of her

own duplicity and the inference to be drawn from his words. Could it be possible her lover, who had seemed so noble and reticent, had been boasting openly of his conquest? And yet so her uncle implied? She dare not question him, she dared not admit her engagement. She had lied, she had acted like a coward; were not these thoughts enough to make her head giddy and her soul sick?

"No," Captain Day went on, "I have said I am content to receive your assurance, knowing you are a lady, and not likely to act like a silly schoolgirl. But now let us understand each other. My son John wishes to make you his wife; he is your cousin, so I need not add he is well born. At my death he will own very considerable property. There is no one that I know more suited to you than he is. He is a good lad, and well-fitted to take care of you; best fitted, indeed, for your interests and his are the same. I have been thinking a trip to Europe would do him good; he can go so well now in my lifetime, and it would be a nice tour for a honeymoon—what do you say?"

"Uncle," at last she found strength to say, "we don't like each other."

Captain Day laughed. "Nay, my dear child," he said, "I know for a fact poor John is desperately smitten, and as for you, you need not be bashful with me. Love begets love." Then he told her they would say no more on the subject at that time, and she left him, and went to her room, utterly dismayed.

If her soldier lover was false, she thought, what did it matter what became of her. She could not despise him as much as she despised herself, but how could she go on living in these solitudes? Then, as a flash of relief, she remembered her uncle's bait—the tour to Europe—relief, even as John's wife; but, she could not and would not believe her lover was untrue, and she cried herself to sleep.

Next morning Captain Day told her jocosely, he had dispatched a coolie to recall John. Again here was an opening for a confession, but again Frances let her fears triumph, and was silent. Instead, however, of John returning "in wedding haste," the coolie came back alone to tell how a man-eating tiger had frightened the tea coolies away, and until John could—as he elegantly wrote—"pot the beast," he must remain where he was.

Both Captain Day and his wife were

greatly excited at this news, and the former determined to go off to his son's help. Five men had one after another been taken by the brute, and, unless he could be killed at once, the Days would suffer serious loss through deficiency of workmen. It was with difficulty Mrs. Day could be persuaded to remain where she was. She felt sure her son would be eaten, perhaps her husband too; and it required the peremptory command of the latter to make her give up the idea of sharing his journey.

The six weeks that followed before the tiger was successfully disposed of were to Frances weeks of unmitigated dreariness and disquietude. Mrs. Day never once alluded to the matter that was distracting her young guest, and the inability to seek advice, or even to talk openly, added greatly to the girl's mental suffering. Christmas was at hand before the gentlemen returned, and the snow lay thick upon the mountains all round.

John met his cousin as he had met her at first, with a blush and a nervous tremor, and for more than a week after his return he avoided her society, and nothing was said further concerning their marriage until one morning early in the New Year, when Frances on awaking heard strange voices in the compound, strange, that is, at first, but presently one sounded that made her jump hastily out of bed and fly to her curtained window, but she could see no one, only heard with ears that flushed and tingled with overpowering delight the voice she so longed to hear once more — the voice of her soldier lover!

He spoke evidently to her uncle.

"I believe I have the pleasure of seeing Captain Day?"

"I am Captain Day."

"I am Lieutenant Græme of the 2nd Lancers."

"Indeed."

"I am on leave, as you may guess — shooting with a brother officer. I — I have the pleasure of knowing Miss Day."

"Miss Day is in England."

"In England! No, surely not; she only —"

"Am I a liar, sir?"

Frances stayed to hear no more, but began huddling on her clothes as rapidly as possible, with the intention of rushing out to give the right answer to her uncle's question, and if need be to throw herself on her lover's protection, and implore him to take her away with him; but the strings and buttons were at enmity with

her trembling fingers, nor can a nineteenth century heroine show herself in dishabille even to gain her liberty; her hair must be brushed, her collar must be pinned, and though her haste was frantic, she was too late. She ran outside to find only her uncle calmly smoking, no other human being in sight.

"Well!" he exclaimed as if startled from a reverie. "Well, what's amiss, little one? — got out of the wrong side of bed? Eh?"

She lost control over herself; her disappointment was greater than she could bear. With tears and sobs of grief and anger, she accused him of perjury, and declared wildly she would run away and rather die in the snow or be eaten by wild beasts than remain under his roof.

He kept silence until her passion wore itself out, than he said calmly.

"You'd better go to bed again till you recover. What do you mean? If you have been listening to what passed between me and a puppy who rode up with all the assurance of a little king, you heard nothing but the truth. My sister, Miss Day, is in England, isn't she? What can her friends be to you that you should rave in so unwomanly a manner?"

"He meant me, uncle; he knew nothing of Aunt Day, he meant me! Oh, won't you call him back?"

"No, certainly not, it's bad enough to have every servant witnessing your conduct to me. I would rather not have an *Englishman* able to bruit it abroad."

She stood sobbing before him. What could she do? She had told a lie; here was the consequence: her lover was true; it was she who had been false and wicked. She was irresolute, but for an instant. With drooping head and voice that savoured of shame, instead of anger, she confessed her fault.

Her uncle acted his part well. "Is it possible?" he exclaimed, as if full of righteous horror at her conduct. "I thought you discreet and truthful. Oh, Frances, how grieved I am to find you otherwise!"

She was touched to the quick, he had touched the right chord, she was grateful for his forbearance; she was shamefaced, heartbroken, and it was in a very faint tone she again asked for her lover to be recalled.

Captain Day sorrowfully shook his head. "The young man is not worthy of you, though you have fallen in my estimation," he said. "He is hot-headed and empty-

minded, let him go; with my consent you shall not see him. When you are of age you can throw yourself away if you like."

A miserable day followed. In the evening John came into the sitting room where she was alone, and asked what had occurred. He had been absent when the stranger came. She was so miserable, she was glad to speak of her trouble even to him — her enemy.

He listened kindly, and refrained from any of his customary rude remarks, nor did he say a word in his own interest.

"Don't make yourself ill," he said, touched by her dejection; "and I'll go and try what can be done to-morrow. I'll tell the chap father made a mistake."

"Will you really?" she cried joyfully.

"I give you my word," he answered.

She put both her hands into his, and smiled gratefully through her tears. He let her hands drop awkwardly, and went away.

But he was sincere, and he rode off early next day, and did not reappear till night.

She was standing out in the snow to see him return.

"Well?" she asked eagerly.

"I had to go all the way to Sufamutkest-House," he said, "before I found him. As soon as he heard my name he insulted me. I swear I'm telling you the truth. He said he never wished to see one of my family again, and that he should be glad to get out of our neighbourhood."

"Uncle must have offended him," Frances exclaimed. "I heard loud talking while I was making haste to dress. You should have explained, John. He thinks, no doubt, I have gone back to England, and he is angry I have gone without a word to him."

"He wouldn't listen," John continued: "he was as savage as a bear. I tell you he turned his back on me, and called for his breakfast, as if I was not there. I would have licked the fellow but for you, Frances; I was never so insulted in my life before."

"What shall I do! Oh, what shall I do!" she cried.

"Do? Why, show him that you can do without him. Don't cry, dear; don't cry; there's a dear. Come along and have some tea. I'm ravenous."

She was very humble to him. He seemed her only friend; for between her and her aunt had passed nothing concerning the stranger's visit.

Mrs. Day was sorry to see the girl so

miserable, but would not invite confidence, because she could not comfort without interfering with her son's interests. A few days passed in ominous calm, and then Captain Day again spoke to his ward.

If she would promise to act cautiously for the future, he said, taking a high hand, he would give his consent to her marriage with his son, and would provide them with handsome means to allow them to visit England *via* Brindisi, that they might see some of the principal Continental cities *en route*. If they were married at once they would just be in time to travel before the heat strengthened. If she did not agree to this plan, he must remove her to his bungalow on the other plantation, where she was less likely to see undesirable acquaintances.

This was a weighty threat. Mrs. Day had told her she considered Bahutburakkhud quite in the world, compared with Chotakhud. It lay four marches further away in the mountains, on the border of a lonely lake; it was approached by a mere coolie track, and was altogether out of the pale of civilization. To be sent there, therefore, to be shut up there all through the terrible rainy season, was an idea that made her tremble.

"Need I give an answer to-day?" she said.

He graciously allowed her three days for consideration, "wishing to treat her with the utmost consideration compatible with his duty;" and during those three days she knew she was a prisoner. Whenever she went outside the house, she was aware her aunt and her uncle contrived to come out too — accidentally of course; and once when she went beyond the compound with some faint idea of meeting some one with whom she could fly to her lover's care, the Khidmutgar came sauntering after her. At the end of the given time, in her despair, she spoke to John.

"Will you not be generous, and refuse to marry me?"

John stammered and blushed. He would do anything to please her, but not that. She could never have Lieutenant Græme: why should she not have him — John? Wouldn't it be nice to start off for Europe before the hot spring and the dreary summer came on? While they were away, perhaps arrangements might be made to let them live at Nynee Tal, and only visit Bahutburakkhud occasionally. She should always do as she liked with him, and he wouldn't mind what she

spent on her dress! This last argument he believed irresistible, and waited to observe its effect.

But she did nothing but cry. What did she care for dress, except to make her look nice in the eyes of those she loved? and she did not love one of her relations; nor did she care where she lived if she married John—the further out of the world the better, so that she might not see strangers sneer at her husband's ignorance and eccentricity. At length a truce was made. They were to be engaged for six months. At the end of that time their marriage must take place. Six months is a long period in youth, and Frances felt for a while something of her former contentment. John never presumed upon the new relations existing between them, never attempted to be loverlike, and for that she was grateful to him; but as the early spring stole on, and the lovely weather began to show signs of breaking up, heralding the annual deluge, her spirits sunk. Three months, four months, passed away out of the six given to her, and relief was more unlikely than ever. She would sit and watch the rosy geranium-trees fade day by day, the picturesque toon-tree unfold its feathery leaves, the wild roses drop their pale sweet blossoms, the starry jasmine grow sickly and decay; and as each bright bud opened and each fair blossom died, she knew time was striding onward, and her unhappy fate coming nearer and nearer. In those days of solitary musings she grew to loathe the sight of the beautiful mountains, to see no beauty in the golden glory of sunset spread over the snowy range, to weary of the incessant babbling of the clear waters of the valley below; the heights seemed to crush her soul, the immensity of the landscape to oppress her beyond endurance; the unbroken stillness, the unvarying scene, the absence of all communication with the outside world, were more than she could support; and when at last the rains had fairly begun, with their accompanying horrors of storm and tempest, her heart gave way, and dreading to die in this wilderness, she went to her uncle and begged him to let John marry her at once, and take her away out of the gloom that was killing her.

Thus with her own hand Frances hastened on her doom, and according to her wish preparations were made to start for Nynee Tal, where was the nearest chaplain. Mrs. Day's preparations were simple enough. She had some of her hus-

band's white shirts washed to be worn by her as white bodies.

"Mother's coming out swell," John remarked; "she's written for an alpaca gown—the first new gown she's had for twenty years."

John himself ordered a black tail-coat and stone-coloured trousers for his wedding suit; he wished to have a waistcoat made out of the skins of musk-rats, but that his father peremptorily forbade; and black satin, spotted with amber, was finally ordered. The bridegroom did not discuss his wedding dress in his bride's presence, or his taste might have roused her from her apathy.

She was going away from Bahutburra-khud; that was all she understood clearly in those last days of her stay there. All beyond possessed no interest; she was going to shift the scene, to lose sight of the solemn ghostlike snowy mountains, to hear sounds of life and progress, instead of the wail of wild beasts and the moan or shriek of the fierce storm-blast. All other senses seemed dulled. She was going into civilization; that was enough; and with feverish impatience she grudged every moment of her stay in these hated solitudes. The last day arrived. Bedding and provisions were packed. Forty coolies lay in the out-houses, ready to start at dawn with their burthens; and tired out with packing, Frances sat in the verandah, towards sunset, looking her last on the magnificent scenery which she had come to consider hateful. Grandeur and more solemn than ever it stretched before her; deepening purples and brightening golds, faintest rose and palest gray, brilliant orange and red tints, were on hillside and sky; the shout of the cuckoo, the gamut of the koela, the laugh of monkeys, the chatter of the green parrots, the clear, sweet whistle of the white-ruffed blackbird, the low, melodious song of the bulbul, and the harsh bass of the indestructible crows, made music in the air; the evening was very calm; there was a lull in the season, and as she sat and gazed, and felt herself refreshed, she was constrained to admire and not detest the land that had brought her so much sorrow.

"But I will never come back again," she said to herself. "I would rather die;" and then wild plans for running away and seeking protection so soon as she reached the European station ran riot in her brain.

By-and-by John Day came up the stairlike path; he had been out for

hours, inquiring the state of the roads, which, never very good, were constantly washed away during the rains. He got off his pony at the entrance to the compound, and taking his rifle from his servant, came with his usual awkward stoop towards his cousin. She looked at him and noticed he was tired, when in an instant his figure became erect, his face full of excitement, and to her horror, she saw him raise his rifle and aim at her.

—When, after a few moments, she regained her consciousness, she found herself on the sofa, and, to her surprise, uninjured, while the Days stood watching her, and several servants peeped in at the open doors.

"You were nearly killed," Mrs. Day exclaimed, as the girl's eyes inquiringly sought hers; "but not by poor Jack. As he came towards you he saw a *Tic polonga*, the most venomous snake in India, raising its head to dart at you. No one has ever been bitten by it and recovered; had he hesitated one instant you would have been poisoned."

"If I'd stopped to think," John said, "he'd have been at you, the brute!"

"But *you* might have killed me!" Frances said, ungratefully ignoring the service he had rendered.

"Pooh!" said the Captain, "I should hope John knows how to aim; the pity was he only had a rifle, for the reptile is blown to pieces, and he would have bottled famously if he'd been killed tenderly."

This incident completely upset poor Frances. She had to give up the idea of riding next day, and to go in a dandy; so instead of having only one dandy in the calvacade—that in which the ayah was carried—there were *two*, a most fortunate circumstance, as after events proved.

They were ready to start at dawn, but were delayed by the difficulty of getting the coolies, for though the latter had been collected over night and their burthens allotted to each, yet the coolie nature is against regularity, punctuality, and common sense.

"Where are the fellows for the dandy?" the Captain cried in vain, and it took some moments while John went over the servants' houses and captured one man here coolly smoking his hookah, and another there plaiting his hair, and others just preparing their morning meal of unleavened cakes, one and all evincing a stolid indifference to time, to their employers, and, after the manner of the

East Indian, to *everything* except their stomach and their pay. Then the bundles had to be re-arranged—some could only carry on their heads, some could only consent to convey burthens slung on sticks, others must have shoulder loads, and as usual, all spoke at once,—coolies, servants, and masters—or rather all *shouted* at once, making a noise that to Frances's inexperienced ears must lead to violent action. But the native rarely uses his limbs if his tongue may have fair play. At last all the loads were taken up and the procession started.

Mrs. Day rode a Bhootia pony, as did also her husband and son. The lady wore an enormous sun-hat, in shape like two porter's knots joined *vis-à-vis*, and the favourite old military cloak was tied in at the waist by a leathern strap, from which hung a large clasp knife, a long hook for taking stones out of the pony's foot, a currycomb for her own hair and the pony's mane, and a small case containing a saddler's needle and thread and scissors, to mend any disaster that might happen to the saddlery. She kept the coolie who carried the day's provisions at her side, while the Captain made it his business to watch the progress of all the baggage, threatening stragglers and encouraging the willing ones in tones that reverberated strangely through the silent land. A gray dull day had followed the gorgeous evening, but it was wonderful to have a day without rain at that season, and the travellers were thankful for the absence of the sun. John rode as near to the dandy as he could, and Frances, making herself bear in mind she owed to him her life, did her best to respond to his remarks cheerfully. At noon they stopped at a lonely stone shed, all round which were the marks of recent fires and litter of ponies. Here they lunched, and let the servants rest. In a very few moments fires were kindled, meal bags opened, and a lively scene of cooking and washing commenced. The brawling stream, whose course the mountain road followed, was here conveniently accessible, and served for drinking, cooking, and bathing purposes. Here, kneeling over the water, was a man noisily brushing his teeth with a bit of bamboo, and rinsing throat and mouth violently. A few yards further stood one knee-deep in the water performing his ablutions. There, squatting close to the brink, over a handful of fire, were two or three kneading bread and mixing the dough with water; while close by sat half-a-dozen

idlers smoking, and letting their tired feet play in the grateful stream. All day till sunset the travellers journeyed on, now on a level with the bed of the river, now hundreds of feet above it, now climbing a narrow ledge, midway up the barren hill-side, now rounding a deep ravine amidst rhododendron woods, and oak or pine forests; sometimes having a limitless view, over countless mountain ranges, to where a boundless level, canopied by heat haze, proclaimed the vast fiery plains; and sometimes seeing only a few yards ahead as the path narrowed and wound amidst a wilderness of exquisite ferns and creepers growing amongst the tall rank underwood and trees. Countless streams trickled or dashed down their mossy beds, and every angle in the road was lined with a profusion of rare plants and shrubs — children of the intense damp of the rainy season — that would have made the fortune of an English florist. Such a wealth of loveliness, such unimagined luxury of colouring and foliage, such indescribable delicacy and harmony of tints appear year after year in those distant wilds, seen but by a dozen creatures capable of appreciating them.

With infinite care and immense expense, the wife of the millionaire forms a collection of sickly ferns and orchids which she proudly shows to a favoured few, and in the dampest corner of her trim grounds she rears a grotto with an artistically trained flow of purling water, to see which visitors press eagerly; but amidst the vast Himalayas, God has bountifully strewn countless beauties — the rarest and loveliest of their kind — and has formed nooks and views that make the enraptured traveller breathless with their exceeding beauty, though the natives of these regions are of a lower type, are more ignorant and more stupid, more debased in their habits and repulsive in their persons than any other of the natives of wide-spreading Asia. Beasts of burthen, and nothing higher, are these poor mountaineers, toiling up and down the breakneck paths as doggedly and with little more intelligence than the salt-laden sheep, or the ragged undersized tattoo that conveys cloth and stores to the mountain towns. These poor wretched people were the only human beings met with all the long way, and few of them betrayed any curiosity at sight of the Europeans.

"We shall see plenty of white faces at Nynce Tal," Frances said.

"Yes," Mrs. Day replied; "and don't

they look washed out after these bronze-coloured people?"

"Yes," her husband added. "No doubt the dark skin and the large black eyes of the East Indian are far handsomer than our pale undecided complexions."

"I suppose one gets accustomed to anything," Frances said with a deep sigh, while in her heart she felt convinced neither time nor custom could reconcile her to John Day and Bahutburakhud.

They passed the night at a dāk bungalow on the edge of a tremendous landslip, which had occurred two years before, and the Captain hoped, as they separated for the night, the ground under their feet would not fall till they were off it.

"It isn't safe," he said, complacently; "but it's too wet to camp out, so we must risk it."

A violent storm came on during the night, and the morning dawned on leaden skies and a drenched earth. There was a consultation as to the prudence of waiting for fine weather, but Mrs. Day decided against delay.

"The roads will be worse after each storm," she argued, "and we are not half-way through the rains yet."

The argument was irresistible, and in a steady drizzle the party pursued their journey. Mrs. Day's groom did not appear when her pony came round, and on inquiry he was declared to be stricken down with fever and ague. With the foolhardiness, or rather senselessness of his people, he had slept out in the open grass, and when the storm came on had been too heavy with sleep to change his resting-place.

"Fool!" cried the Captain, "he deserves a rare good licking, and if he isn't well by the time we return, I'll give him one;" but the Captain never returned to carry out his threat.

As they proceeded they found the road had suffered much from the night's tempest, and every native they met declared it had been carried away in places; but allowances must always be made for Eastern exaggeration, and they pushed on. For once, however, the natives did not exaggerate, and presently a turn in the path disclosed a great gap in it. Here, however, the earth had not fallen far — the mountain side projected within a few yards below, and the debris of the road afforded safe footing for a scramble to the other side of the dislodgement. The next stoppage was more serious.

The pathway continually penetrated

above deep ravines far into the heart of the mountain, till reaching the end of the opening it was joined by a rustic bridge over the deep drop to the corresponding pathway running along the further side. In this particular far-reaching inlet, a superb sheet of crested water came grandly over the face of the hill, and fell with roar and crash sheer down the precipice below the road. The little bridge had been broken by the force of the water, and afforded no footing except for a yard or so from each bank.

Captain Day shouted to a group of coolies composedly seated on the other side, and they told him the water would subside in the course of a few hours, when it would be possible to patch up the bridge.

"A few hours!" the Captain cried impatiently. "Inert idiots these nigs are. Let's have a rope and go hand-over-hand."

Even John objected to this plan as too dangerous an experiment, but both father and mother laughed at his prudence.

"Your mother and I," he said, "have crossed many a worse thing than this. I'm not going to sit shivering here till that drop thins; if only that fool your mother's syce were here, it would be comparatively easy, for he knows the dodge so well. You and Frances can wait if you choose."

John was stung by his father's contemptuous tone. "If any one can cross," he said, "I can; look here," and darting forward he ran along the quivering pole that stretched a little way over the flood, and which had been one of the two main supports of the bridge, and thence, with a bound imitated from the tiger, he alighted safely on the other side.

The phlegmatic natives were roused into sufficient excitement to utter "Wah, wah!" admiringly at his daring, while his parents loudly applauded him.

Mrs. Day jumped off her pony—"I can cross in the same way," she exclaimed, "it's not much of a jump, after all."

Her husband pulled her back. "Nay, twenty years ago you could; not now. Don't be a fool, Day," he cried, "here's the rope."

So a stout rope was flung across the chasm, and clinging to it with his hands, his body hanging over the flood, Captain Day worked himself safely across, and his wife prepared to follow. For Frances there was nothing but waiting; she was horrified at the mere idea of venturing after her aunt, and disagreeable as was

the thought of the weary waiting, she was resolved to be patient rather than venturesome. Mrs. Day set out valiantly, her slight little figure with its extraordinary garments surging to and fro, as she went on hand over hand—such thin little hands. She had got to the further side, and her husband, bending down, had already hold of her wrist, when she suddenly let go with one hand, and dragging her husband with her, she fell down the precipice quicker than the roaring water!

It was barely eleven o'clock when this happened, but it was eight in the evening before the travellers proceeded on their way. For hours the cousins waited one on each side of the cruel torrent, till little by little the roar subsided as the fall thinned. As soon as it had reached a less formidable spread, the young man and his servants clambered over the hill-side, and after long and agonizing search came upon the mutilated bodies. Their death must have been instantaneous, for they had fallen nearly 100 feet. They lay within a few yards of each other; Mrs. Day, the lightest, having dropped furthest. It was a work of time and great difficulty to carry them up to the road. Meantime a number of villagers had collected to mend the bridge, over which Frances was carried just as John and his precious burthens appeared.

"You will ride mother's pony," he said, "we want both dandies."

He spoke in his usual manner, and issued his orders promptly. He made no comment upon what had happened, yet it was plain he was sorely wounded; his shriek when his parents fell had reached Frances above the rush of the waterfall, and for an instant he had seemed about to throw himself headlong after them. His cousin did her best to hide the terror she felt at riding the dangerous roads in the uncertain light, for though the moon was up, the sky was thick with clouds. But all through her life the horrors of that day and night were vividly present to her whenever she was out of health. The two marches to Nynsee Tal had to be made one, on account of the necessity for reaching the station as quickly as possible, so all through the night the ghastly procession toiled on.

Every rustle in the jungle, every cry of wild animals, every sound made the girl's heart beat with terror. When they entered the woods, torches were lighted, and the men shouted at intervals to scare

away the tiger and the leopard, but on the unsheltered ledge over the bare mountain side the torches were extinguished, and in the dim light the awful depths below assumed yet more awful profundity. First in the procession the two dandies were carried, and their heavy swing between the bearers was horribly significant; after them rode John, then Frances, then the Ayah, mounted on the Captain's pony, and last of all the baggage. Now and then they passed a heap of coolies huddled together for protection round a bonfire. Sometimes a halt was made to allow the men to refresh themselves for a few moments with the hookah, but the silence of the little party was rarely broken. It was almost noon next day when the last great ascent was made, and they saw stretched 800 feet beneath them the deep dark lake and the picturesque houses of Nynee Tal. As they began to descend John placed himself on foot in front and whistled the "Dead March in Saul" solemnly until the dāk bungalow was reached.

"Father would have had that played before him had he died while an officer," he said, as he assisted his cousin from her pony. "If he could have heard me, he'd have been pleased I showed him such an attention."

That evening when the bodies were carried over to the burial-ground, John, arrayed in what was to have been his wedding suit, again slowly marched at the head, whistling.

The chaplain stopped him at the entrance to the church-yard, and by reminding him of his duty as chief mourner, prevented the poor fellow making himself a butt for scoffers any longer.

On his return to the bungalow he freed Frances from her engagement to him.

Ten years afterwards Frances Day, who was living with a maiden aunt, met her cousin John again. They had parted at Nynee Tal the day after the funeral, she to remain with the chaplain's wife till she could find an escort to England, he to return to his tea-plantation. Since then they had not even corresponded, though they were aware of each other's movements through their agents. Very soon after Frances's coming of age John had sold the estate and quitted India. He travelled over the Continent of Europe, and did his best to repair the want of proper cultivation in his boyhood by seeking the society of clever men and

studying standard literature. When he presented himself to his cousin she was struck by the improvement in his manner and person. Mr. Day, the accomplished traveller, bore little resemblance to "Jack Sahib" of Bahutburakhud. Frances was altered for the better too. The terrible accident she had witnessed, the mental trials she had undergone, had borne good fruit. The realities of life, its uncertainty, its trials, had been brought home to her, and when she again met John she could appreciate the good sense, and reverence the good heart. They saw each other constantly for a month; at the end of that time John asked her to be his wife.

"There is no one but you in all the world," he said, "who has the same memories with me. I have many good friends, and yet at times I feel so terribly alone, so crushed with the memory of that sorrowful past, that I long even for old Muddea, or 'Jān Cheenimān' to speak to of my old home. I have done my best during the last few years to make myself more like other men of my position, and tried hard to rub off the rusticity of my bringing up. I have even taken pains to brush my hair," he added, smiling, "but until lately I never allowed myself to think why I did it all. Since meeting you again I have discovered my aim has been to become less disagreeable in your eyes, Frances. I know better now than to press myself upon you by saying our marriage would save bother, but indeed it will save my life from being cheerless and purposeless. Give me the right to make you forget the sadness of our former engagement in a new one under happy auspices. I have loved you all these years, and you are associated with my tenderest memories."

Surely there is no greater magician than Time. Frances had once declared from her heart, she would rather die than marry John Day, and now she admitted she could imagine no greater earthly happiness than wedded life with him.

"What about Lieutenant Græme?" John asked, when he had assured himself of his cousin's affection.

She laughed and blushed as she remembered her high and mighty behaviour concerning the said Lieutenant Græme.

"I saw him at a ball in London five years since," she said; "he was good enough to recognize me and to ask me to dance, and afterwards he begged to be allowed to introduce his wife to me!"

"Well, and you shrieked and fainted,

of course; or assumed an appearance of dignified scorn, eh?"

"No, I didn't. I was so astonished at not feeling anything but amused surprise that I forgot what was due to my betrayed affection, and actually got up quite a liking for the young lady, and used to visit her and play with her babies till they returned to India."

"But you must have lost all your gushing romance!" John said. "Ah! you are not the same Frances Day who begged my father to hasten our marriage. Pray, are you going to insist on no delay this time?"

J. MASTERMAN.

From Fraser's Magazine.
THE FOURRIERE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FLEMISH INTERIORS."

The things themselves are neither rich nor rare:
The wonder's how the d—l they got there!

EVERY visitor to Paris is more or less accurately acquainted with the Morgue: there is, however, an institution analogous in character, which scarcely any foreigners, and comparatively few even of the inhabitants of Paris, know much about: it may be called the Morgue of *things*, and is termed the Fourrière. This by no means uninteresting dépôt is a succursal of the Préfecture de Police, specially devoted to the harbouring and protection of all waifs and strays encumbering the streets of "Paris et sa banlieue," and is consequently stored with lost, mislaid, forsaken, and unclaimed property of every description. The mass of heterogeneous articles warehoused beneath its expansive roof furnishes, in its singular detail, an abundance of the most intricate suggestions. The Fourrière likewise receives stray animals of whatever kind. This unique magazine, situated in the Rue de Pontoise, is a solid structure of spacious dimensions, protected by a strong wall, and defended by two Gardes Municipaux. Moreover, a *drapeau*—the French are fond of these demonstrative attributes of power—faded and tattered, it is true, but still a *drapeau*, droops, rather than waves, above its entrance, and imparts to it an imposing *cachet* of officiality.

Its iron gates, closely boarded within, are opened only to the bearer of a permit, and admit the visitors into a yard, on one side of which is the dwelling, on the other the *bureau*, of the Contrôleur: among the latter is a small chamber, serving as a

petty court of justice in cab disputes; for, unless of a grave character, they are heard and settled here. It is in this office, therefore, that plaintiff and defendant undergo their examination, and learn the decision of the Préfecture. For the better administration of justice, in cases where it may become necessary to confront the parties, this room is so constructed as to admit of isolating them while establishing between them the required means of communication.

The centre compartment of the Fourrière may be called a coach or, rather, cart-house, and is of large proportions, roughly but substantially roofed. Within it are stowed stray and ownerless vehicles, for, strange to say, such are constantly found by the police in the Paris streets. It is by no means unusual for the driver of a cart, or the coachman of a street-carriage to turn into a wine-shop or *cabaret*, and there forget himself, leaving his vehicle standing at the door; and disreputable hackney-coach-men are frequently known to take their horse out of the shafts and sell him, abandoning their carriage in the middle of the road, while they go off to the *barrière* to get drunk on the money. Sequestered here, we found cabs, hand-carts, trucks, barrows, and a solitary perambulator, representing the practical results of police surveillance.

Hither, too, every public carriage destined to ply for hire in the streets of Paris must be brought, to acquire the necessary licence, and to receive its number, in exchange for the prescribed fee of 70 centimes to the Contrôleur.

Among the vehicles in custody, we found a curiously constructed phaeton, clumsy in shape and proportions, to which our guide pointed contemptuously, observing it was a Prussian "machine," left in the outskirts after the siege. We also noticed wheels and other portions of omnibuses, collected, as we learned, from the *débris* of barricades, after the streets were disencumbered of these obstacles; among other curiosities was a perfectly incomprehensible consignment of eight enormous barrels, the presence of which on the spot where they were discovered no one could explain: they were brought hither from a field outside the *mur d'enceinte*, and on being opened proved to be closely packed with *opal lamp shades*! They had stood here about fifteen months without being claimed.

Above, is a broad, boarded gallery, following the walls and reached by a wide,

roughly constructed step-ladder. Having ascended it, we found ourselves in presence of the most inconceivable collection of chattels and properties—we cannot call them “goods”—of every possible description. Incongruous, ill-conditioned, and worthless as they are, however, every object that composes this wonderful aggregate is labelled, numbered, and dated, as well as inscribed with a brief outline of what is known of its history: all these details are likewise entered in a register.

Before us, surrounded by a coarse matting, is a crazy *moblier*, which, we learn on reading its ticket, has been standing here for about a twelvemonth; it was found in the Rue St. Victor, having been turned out of doors by the owner's landlord, who had for some time previously ceased to receive any rent from him. There were several such parcels, but the description of one will serve for all: a deal table, minus a leg, its leaves hanging by part of a hinge; two or three heavy arm-chairs, with oval backs, covered in torn and faded Utrecht velvet, the original hue of which few would be bold enough to determine; a cracked mirror in a broken frame; a couch which reminds us of Noah's ark; a clumsy wooden bedstead, with straw-stuffed mattress; rusty stew-pans; cracked basins; spoutless jugs and handle-less cups; two or three lithographs, stained and torn, of battle-scenes—“les gloires de la France”—in blistered frames, once gilt, but now chipped, peeled, and cracked at the corners; broken china ornaments; a child's cradle; a battered *modérateur* lamp, &c. &c. Whence has it all come, and where are those who lived among these things? The official superscription tells only the brief and melancholy tale of its detention: there is nothing but our own imagination to help out the living history of its antecedents, full, no doubt, of strange adventure, and incidents that could not even be dreamed of out of Paris.

Farther on we come to a series of bundles—bundles of every size and description, containing, Heaven only knows what!—bundles sewn up in matting, corded up in drugget, tied up in a table-cover, in a blanket, a sheet, a brick-red pocket-hankerchief. Here we find a pair of steps and several ladders of various sizes; there, three glaziers' frames side by side, with their squares of glass on them—the owners probably had set them down while they went on some er-

rand of amusement, or possibly they may have been abandoned by some runaway apprentice; beyond is a heap of rotten, discoloured mattresses, taken, we are told, from the barricades in the Rue de Rivoli; near these, the stock-in-trade of an itinerant vendor of crockery, followed by a number of large battered tin milk-vessels; and then the counter of a wine-shop with all its lead fittings and brass taps; with it, a bagatelle-board, its green baize cover moth-eaten, torn, and stained, and few of its balls and cues still surviving; parcels of old books; portfolios of mildewed, blistered prints; files of old papers; broken musical instruments, a hand-organ, a stringless guitar, and a violin with the back unglued, probably the sole companion in misery of some wretched itinerant musician; old boots and old umbrellas, and at the extreme end four or five sacks of corn, proclaimed by the label they bear to have occupied the spot since the winter of the year 1869.

Doubtless many a melancholy—who knows? perhaps many a romantic—history attaches to the miserable relics with which we are surrounded, and not a few are too obviously connected with misfortune, squalor, and crime. One little, worn and crumbling *moblier*, the Contrôleur told us, was the property of a poor old fellow who had once carried on a respectable business, but the long illness of his wife, and his own discouragement after her death, together with the extravagant and heartless conduct of a grandson, had reduced him to such abject poverty that he found himself unable to continue in the humble domicile he had for many years occupied: he consequently paid up his last *trimestre*, took a single room, and craved a corner for his furniture at the Fourrière, in the delusive hope of being able one day to pay the warehousing, and take it back; year after year, however, passed without bringing any prospect of this consummation, and meantime each component article was becoming more faded, more broken, and more worthless: the aged owner, not less broken and decrepit himself, still seemed to retain a feeling of attachment for these mute witnesses of his happier years, and was in the habit of creeping, from time to time, to the Fourrière to inspect his poor little property, and note its caducity, which, as if by sympathy, kept pace with his own.

The Contrôleur, touched by the sad and silent perseverance with which he

watched the mouldering remains of his former life, told him one day that if he liked to remove them he would remit the charge incurred, but the forlorn old man only looked up helplessly, and mournfully shook his head. At length his visits ceased altogether, and we could not but share the opinion expressed by the Contrôleur that his tottering steps would bring him hither no more.

From this gallery, on either side, open several lofts, in which is piled up and stowed away an endless amount of rubbish. One of these seemed to be devoted entirely to baskets of every shape, size, and destination; another to bottles; a third to planks and scaffold-poles, odd pieces of wood and timber, and so on.

There does not appear to be any stipulated period for clearing out this heterogeneous mass of deposits: their disposal — if not claimed within a certain time — depends on the will of the Préfet de Police, without whose directions they cannot be meddled with.

The stables and kennel are placed respectively on either side of the central *hangar* we have described, and afford a spectacle of another order. In the former, three or four jaded hacks stand with dejected mien before their empty manures, awaiting the issue of their fate; oxen, goats, sheep, asses, any cattle indeed, straying or trespassing in the public highway are seized and impounded here to share their gloomy captivity. Occasionally, as we have said, a *voiture de place* is found standing in some street, forsaken by the driver; it is thereupon taken possession of by the police, and brought to the Fourrière: when the coachman, who is often only temporarily engaged in some drinking-place, recovers from his orgy and misses his equipage, he is pretty well aware of the locality in which he must search for it. As soon, therefore, as he presents himself to the Contrôleur, he is required to assist at the minute professional examination to which both vehicle and quadruped are submitted before they can be restored to him or allowed to be again used for the public service. If the horse be found by the veterinary-surgeon attached to the institution to be diseased, worn out, or unfit for use, the driver is obliged to replace him before again plying for hire; and should the wheelwright employed to test the condition of the carriage, pronounce it unsafe, he is compelled to have it properly repaired; if beyond repair, it is condemned and broken up.

To the kennel we next turn our attention, invited by the pitiable wailings of the wretched captives detained there, though, alas! powerless to help them. It is to the tender mercies of the *équarisseur* that the poor brutes are entrusted, and he it is who undertakes to do the honours of his department to visitors. He unlocks their prison-door, then opens it cautiously, looks in, and having ascertained that none of the occupants are at large, enters and admits us, carefully closing the door again. We find ourselves in a paved court consisting of two compartments: along the walls of both, on either side, are built rows of cages divided by wooden partitions; they are of limited dimensions, especially in proportion to the size of some of the inmates. All these are chained; and the accumulated howlings, wailings, barkings, and bayings, which have been proceeding on a crescendo scale since our entrance, now constitute a turmoil actually bewildering.

The dogs we see (and hear) are drawn from all quarters of Paris, and comprise, in fact, all canine *flâneurs* found loitering homeless and purposeless in the streets of this dangerous capital; even those lucky dogs who have a servant to wait on them, who live on dainties, sit on cushions, and ride in carriages — should they take it into their heads to enjoy their liberty, and walk out unattended, are, whenever they escape the vigilance of the dog-stealer, liable to the common fate: neither is any more respect shown to the liberty of those grave, business-like dogs, who trot along the streets, never hesitating as to which turning they shall take, with an air of self-reliance so pronounced that it is impossible not to believe they are bent on some important errand — even these are relentlessly arrested, and, all protests notwithstanding, are borne off to the Rue de Pontoise: once there they are submitted to the scrutiny of a competent judge, who pronounces to which category each is to be consigned. Some of these canine captives are so handsome, so well-bred, and so unquestionably dogs of birth, that the merest glance suffices to certify their patrician descent, and therefore to determine the treatment they are to receive. Those who can lay claim to the privileges of class are shown to a cell constructed with some view to comfort and sanitary considerations. The floor is of stone, and is made to slope at a slight incline; it is also covered with clean litter, and each pensioner is provided with a tin

bowl containing a not very liberal allowance of bones, and a basin of water. This scanty and simple fare, doled out to dogs of the first category only, serves to keep them alive during the eight days they occupy the *chénil*.

During this interval it is competent for their masters to apply for and recover them; but, alas! unless they represent absolute money value, these faithful creatures await too often in vain the reciprocal fidelity and solicitude of their masters.

Every Parisian who loses a valuable dog—after, of course, in the first instance, suspecting he must have been robbed of it—repairs to the Fourrière in the forlorn hope that the animal may have been picked up by the police and carried thither. If such be the case, and he be desirous of recovering him, all he has to do is to describe the dog, prove his ownership, pay the expenses incurred, and obtain restitution.

From a variety of causes, however, it happens that many of even the more valuable dogs are not called for within the prescribed period; a sale therefore takes place every Sunday morning, when they are disposed of to the highest bidder. A written attestation is handed to the purchaser declaring the conditions under which he has obtained the dog, and protecting him from all pursuit on the part of the former owner.

The system of dog-stealing has, of course, been as carefully and successfully cultivated in Paris as in London; we are not therefore surprised to learn that the Fourrière was at one time exposed to frequent raids from the clever fraternity who practise it. Among the tricks by which they managed to cheat the officials, the most frequent appears to have been that known in thieves' slang by the name of *grinchissage*. The *grinchisseurs* always hunt in couples, and their plan was this. One of them would call at the *bureau* and politely request permission to look round the kennel, in the hope of finding there a dog he had just lost. Casting his practised eye over the collection, and while regretting that his missing pet should have fallen a prey to those "rascally dog-stealers," he would be taking advantage of the opportunity to note all the points in any valuable dog that might happen to be confined there; then, regretting the trouble he had given, he would withdraw. Next day came the second, who followed up the game by announcing the loss of a

favourite dog, and expressing the hope that it might have been brought there by the police; "perhaps," adds he, "you could tell me whether you have one answering such and such a description." Several robberies were thus effected; but at length the "dodge" was discovered, and a new regulation, founded upon it, was framed, by which no applicant is allowed access to the kennel, until he has given a written description of the dog he has come to seek. To this document he must append his name and address, together with that of a respectable referee, should the "administration" see any reason to require it.

During our visit, a woman servant was admitted to inspect the inmates of the kennel with a view to the recovery of her master's little dog, which had been missing since the day previous. Unfortunately for her, it appeared to have found its way into other hands, and so the Contrôleur at once concluded on hearing the description.

"C'était, monsieur," she said mournfully, "une si jolie petite bête! Hélas, si vous saviez!—et gentil, et docile, et fidèle! Ah, mon Dieu," she continued with a deep sigh, "un petit mouton noir tout frisé—mais frisé—"

"Ah, ma foi," replied the Contrôleur, "un mouton noir tout frisé, vous sentez bien, ça ne se perd pas; ça se vole; mais un animal de cette espèce, ça doit aller dans les trois cents francs."

"C'est que c'est vrai ce que vous dites là, monsieur; ça valait bien ce que vous dites, et puis le patron l'aimait tant—"

"Ah, mon Dieu, que voulez-vous? Il fallait le garder à la maison; tout de même, si par hasard il trouvait le chemin de la fourrière, soyez tranquille, on vous le fera savoir tout de suite."

The poor girl, however, seemed to attach but little hope to this issue, and went away with tears in her eyes.

Per contra, a fine frisky, liver-coloured setter was brought in, and attracted general admiration from the officials: as there was no doubt as to his value, a place was unhesitatingly assigned him in the rank of the aristos.

As for the poor brutes condemned to the cells of the second category, their condition is a very hard one, and they rarely re-cross the fatal threshold of their dungeon. Nor is this all: three days constitute the term of their miserable lives from the time they are kidnapped, and during that period neither food nor even water is accorded them!

"Pour ceux-là," said our guide, "ils n'ont aucune valeur; donc, ils ne méritent pas d'être nourris." The sequitur would have been amusing but for the cruelty of the result, yet did we note many expressive and intelligent faces among them, and there was something infinitely pathetic in the meek resignation with which they seemed to accept their lot. "Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité," is profusely inscribed on all the Paris buildings, whether standing or in ruins: the Commune forgot to paint this on the walls of the Fourrière, where the distinctions of patrician and plebeian are followed by such invidious results.

At the extremity of the yard is the canine "Place de Grève," where out of the thousand dogs brought monthly to the Fourrière, 650 are mercilessly hung by the *équarisseur*!

We found much in these details to shock our humane feelings; and the sight of these poor creatures deprived of their liberty and of all chance of finding their way back to their homes, exposed to the heat or inclemency of the weather, in a sometimes damp, sometimes sultry yard, without water and without food, for three days and nights—even though unconscious of their impending fate—touched us profoundly, and haunted our imagination long after we had left the kennel. The imploring eyes of some, the resigned attitude of others, the starved and helpless aspect of all, seemed doubly sad in presence of the indifferent, not to say brutal, tone of the "*maître des hautes œuvres*," rendered callous, no doubt, by long familiarity with his occupation.

"A quoi bon les nourrir ou les arroser?" said he, with a shrug, as he administered a kick on the nose of one who had thrust it through the bars of his cage, and seemed to be piteously, if mutely, appealing to us to intercede for him. "A quoi bon, quand après-demain ils seront pendus? Ma foi, ils en valent bien la peine, allez."

It would seem that sometimes he is spared the trouble of performing this revolting duty; in a corner which he did not seem to care we should explore, we discerned the starved carcass of a dog that had died in his cage, and near it another who did not seem likely to hold out many hours. Whether these had been forgotten, and had been kept unhung over the usual time, it was impossible to determine; possibly they had been brought in in a more hungry condition than the rest.

On the day of our visit, as we were told, a lady had called at the *bureau*, coolly desiring to leave her dog at the Fourrière. The Contrôleur, surprised at so singular a request, asked for an explanation, apprehending that she did not understand the object and uses of the establishment. She simply replied that she wished them to keep it. "What are we to do with it?" said the official. "Mon Dieu, cela m'est bien égal," answered the lady; "I can't kill it myself; no one will buy it; and I don't mean to pay the tax any longer." Of course the arrangement was altogether repudiated, but doubtless the owner of the superfluous dog indemnified herself by "losing" it in the streets among other waifs abandoned there for similar reasons.

We were not sorry to turn our back on this scene of desolation, and hurry out of hearing of wails which seemed to betray that in this canine *inferno* all hope had been abandoned at the door.

A thousand unowned or disowned dogs, cast unmuzzled every month upon the public streets, no doubt present a formidable difficulty to deal with. Still, the question of their treatment deserves attention, and there is every reason to believe that the Société Protectrice des Animaux, which employs itself to much purpose in Paris, would willingly co-operate in any improvement that a humane ingenuity might suggest.

From The Spectator.

THE BIRDS OF NEW ZEALAND.

A CELEBRATED naturalist has said that "New Zealand is the most interesting ornithological province in the world," and Mr. Buller's exhaustive history of its birds seems to justify the assertion. Our distant, beautiful, romantic colony, the last remnant of a former continent, and, geologically considered, probably the oldest country on the face of our globe, contains at the present day the only living representatives of an extinct race of wonderful birds. It is by a difficult and vague effort of imagination only that we can picture to ourselves the aspect of the world in the time when the huge creatures to whom modern science has assigned names as clumsy and impracticable as their gigantic frames, had the mud and the forests, the caverns and the ice-fields, all to themselves; when the cave-bear had no prevision of an insignificant

animal with two legs and a smooth skin who should teach his ursine descendants to dance; when the Arctic reindeer slept with his nose in the snow, untroubled by a dream of sledges to be drawn by degenerate antlered serfs in the far future, and when the mammoth ancestors of "the earth-shaking beast" made war on their own account. There is an immeasurable distance between the wildest image of desolation, the grandest picture of untrodden solitude on the face of the earth, as it now is, and the contemplation of it in those awful far-off years, when,—

No ship went o'er the waters wide, no boat
with oar or sail,
But the wastes of the sea were tenanted by the
dragon and the whale.

It is so difficult for the lords of creation to picture the wide world without any trace or promise of themselves in it, pervaded by strange forms of animal life, full of motion and instinct, but silent from articulate speech. But the bird-world of New Zealand is more easily imagined; it remained undisturbed by the presence of man so much longer; its magnificent forests, its coasts, swept by the vastest stretch of ocean in the world, were, until 500 years ago, the home of beautiful winged and wingless creatures which belonged to the prehistoric times. Throughout the paradisaical land, with its mighty mountains, its glaciers, its pleasant valleys, its great sweeps of rich flax-bearing country, its long stretches of undulating fern downs, its copses of tropical trees, its precipitous gorges, its beneficent streams, there have been found no traces of animals which could have warred with or hurt the birds. Brute enemies came in with human invaders, but when Captain Cook first visited New Zealand he found only the native rat (smaller than the Hanoverian) and a little green lizard. Through what unnumbered ages had the birds had it all to themselves, before the ancestors of the Maories came in canoes across 3,000 miles of ocean from the Sandwich Islands, five centuries ago, and, it may be, beholding the gigantic Moa assembling in crowds to observe the strangers—whom they would not dread, having never known fear—took them for some terrible kind of warriors in feathered panoply? Were there traditions among the plumed giant-warders of the great island of the awful ancientness of days when the land stretched on and on, to distances which even the flight of the frigate-bird could

not have compassed, until a time came when immeasurable mountain-bearing tracts of it went down into the deep, and the waste of waters rolled where it had been? If, from age to age, the birds did really "confabulate," what wonderful traditions of nature must have died out with that last Moa, of which the natives tell. At Punakitiri-Turanga, in the North Island, it lived, say the Maori, in its solitary old age, and when resting, stood always on one foot, with its beak turned towards the quarter whence the wind blew. A weird sight it must have been, in its height and bulk like Sindbad's roc, with ostrich head and the wide, bright, long-lashed eye of the desert-bird, which sees the simoon-laden wind before the red sands have begun their deadly dance along the red horizon. The songs and traditions of the Maori frequently refer to the wearing of the feathers of the Moa by queenly damsels and princely chieftains; and some of the early colonists remember chiefs, whose veracity they could not doubt, who assured them that they had often seen the beautiful rare feathers of the renowned bird of their ancestors. It is gone, with the Great Auk, the Dodo, and the scarlet-robed *Aphanapteryx* of Mauritius, but it is more interesting than any of them, as the chief of a great bird-kingdom, unshared by other animal life. Perhaps the giants did not rule,—it may be that the dwarfs had the best of it there, too, being, even among birds, "mostlly sassy,"—but how grand they must have looked!

Immense numbers of other huge wingless birds, of various genera and species, existed in New Zealand within recent historic times; and their diminutive representatives (the different species of *Apteryx*) still exist, but they are rapidly disappearing, dying out by decay, under the changed physical conditions of the country, and being killed out by the beasts which would have had no chance with their great ancestors. A tap from the beak of a Moa would have done the work of a modern poleaxe, but Mr. Buller altogether discredits the story of the Kiwi's being "capable of inflicting a dangerous blow, sometimes even killing a dog." A complete life-history of these birds before their final extirpation, such as Mr. Buller gives us, is deeply interesting from every point of view, of course to the scientific, but also to the unscientific mind, for which the tenants of the bird-world have a fanciful charm, not only in their beauty and their joyfulness, but

because they must be sought for in the hidden places of nature, in bush, swamp, and jungle. The ground-birds, as we may call the wingless creatures, resemble no others in shape, and though no larger than guinea-fowl, their legs are as powerful as those of an ostrich. Mr. Buller had seventeen of them in his possession at different times,—three had been caught by muzzled dogs in the groves and marshes of the Upper Wanganui, the last stronghold of the Apteryx in the North Island, where they used to travel in companies of from six to twelve, and make the country resound at night with their shrill cry. One fine female Kiwi was brought from Banana by a native, who had taken it from a small natural cavity on a wild hill-side. Its skeleton is in the University Museum at Cambridge now, and this is a brief account of it in captivity:—"During the day it retires into a small dark chamber, where it remains coiled up in the form of a ball, and if disturbed or dislodged, moves drowsily about, and seeks the darkest corner of its prison, when it immediately rolls itself again into an attitude of repose. Night is the time of its activity, and the whole nature of the bird then undergoes a change; coming forth from its diurnal retreat full of animation, it moves about the aviary unceasingly, tapping the walls with its long slender bill, and probing the ground in search of earthworms. The feeding of this bird at night with the large glowworm ("tokitipa" of the natives) is a very interesting sight. This annelid, which often attains a length of 12, and sometimes 20 inches, with a proportionate thickness, emits at night a bright phosphoric light. The mucous matter which adheres to its body appears to be charged with the phosphorus, and on its being disturbed or irritated, the whole surface of the worm is illumined with a bright green light, sufficiently strong to render adjacent objects distinctly visible. Seizing one of these long worms in its large mandibles, the Kiwi proceeds to kill it by striking it rapidly on the ground or against some hard object. During this operation the bird may be distinctly seen under the phosphoric light; and the slime which attaches itself to the head and bill renders those parts highly phosphorescent, so that, even after the luminous body itself has been swallowed, the actions of the bird are still visible. There is no longer the slow and half-stupid movement of the head and neck, but the bill is darted

forward with a restless activity, and travels over the surface of the ground with a continued sniffing sound, as if the bird were guided more by scent than by sight in its search for food." The captive birds never uttered the loud whistling cry which fills the mountain-haunts of the Kiwi with sound, and the old ones shun the sight of man, trying vainly to hide themselves. Mr. Buller at first believed that only one species of brown apteryx existed, but he is now convinced that there are two, readily distinguishable from each other by a remarkable difference in the structure of their plumage. The grey Kiwi is still abundant, but is never seen in the North Island, and the diggers are doing their best to exterminate it, by eating itself and its eggs. Though, perhaps, these fast-disappearing creatures have the greatest interest for us, being links between our little day and the unsearchable past for whose lore we yearn, the avifauna of New Zealand is rich in other special features which are full of charm. A large proportion of the genera are peculiar to the country, while some of the forms are perfectly anomalous, being entirely without a parallel in any other part of the world. And those that are not quite strange to us, how bright and beautiful they are! The birds of Brazil, and of Borneo, the butterflies of the Malaccas, and of Mariposa, their own especial grove, are not more brilliant and graceful than the birds which Mr. Buller has drawn for us, with all the grand and various surroundings of their dwelling-places. How birds are missed where they are not, travellers have told us. Humbert is disposed to attribute the absence of emotion with which he contemplated the bright, beautiful landscapes of Japan to the want of the sweet and joyous notes of song-birds. Near home, we have all missed them in the stately glades of Fontainebleau. In Ireland, a place where birds do not sing is "suspicious"—something "unlucky" lurks there; crime and sorrow have passed over it at some time, and the air is weighted by them, so that the fleet wing cannot cleave it, and the sweet, piercing note of praise and gladness cannot rise upon it. Where the skylark may not warble, evil things have been. In the Australian bush the mocking-bird is a relief, and in the Arctic solitudes the clang of the sea-fowl is music to the ear. But the New-Zealand settler, in remote places, and on the borders of the great

forests, has his morning concert at the dawn of day, when the famous Campanile with its silver tone rings out the Angelus in the stillness, and all the plumed choristers, robed in many colours, take up the strain. The ocean birds are numerous and beautiful, the rivers and lakes of the interior swarm with wild-fowl, and the solemn, ghostly white crane, which, in Japan, attends sedately upon the toilers in the rice swamps, inhabits remote places in New Zealand. "As solitary as a white crane" is a proverb among the Maories, who are distinguished by their habits of accurate observation of the facts of nature. They dearly love their birds, and watch the decline of many of the ancient species with regret. They account in a strange way for the gradual disappearance of the small native birds, alleging that they are in the habit of gathering their food by dipping their long tongues into the blossoms of native trees, but that since the introduction of bees the latter have likewise sought the same blossoms for honey, and while concealed in the flower have stung the tongues of the birds, and so caused their death. Then, in their melancholy and poetical way, they compare the condition and fate of the birds with their own, and observe, that while unconscious of the dangers introduced by civilization, they are exposed to its pit-falls, and become its victims, and in the same manner as the birds are themselves gradually disappearing. The study of the wonderful collection which Mr. Buller has made has many-sided attractions, but none greater than in the image which it suggests of a land of exquisite beauty, once inhabited only by the fairest and brightest of creatures, and in which dwelt no hateful or hurtful thing.

From The Saturday Review.
PROGRESS OF INDIA.

We have at length seen a model blue-book. The "Statement exhibiting the Moral and Material Progress and Condition of India during the year 1871-72" is the first of a new series of the Reports annually presented by the India Office, and it has been arranged so as to admit of easy reference on the part of persons interested in any one of the fifteen heads under which the affairs of India are grouped. Where necessary, the account of what has been done during the year un-

der review is prefaced by a summary of the earlier history of the subject. Several maps of India are inserted, each coloured to illustrate the particular subject treated of. When we add that the statement seems to be thoroughly well done, that there is a very full table of contents prefixed to it, and that it is comprised within a blue-book of 160 pages, we shall not be thought to have praised Mr. Markham's labours too highly. Englishmen cannot now complain of the impossibility of getting any information on Indian subjects. If they study this volume and its successors, they may easily know more about India than they probably know about their own country.

There is something very striking in the picture here presented of the Indian Government. There may be different opinions as to the wisdom which characterizes its labours, but there can be none as to the motive which dictates them. Everywhere the Government is seen playing the part of a visible Providence. To those who are accustomed to the conception of government which prevails in England this continual activity may seem excessive, but India is yet a long way from the point at which a people becomes demoralized by having too much done for it. In the most pressing needs to which they are exposed the natives cannot help themselves. They are powerless in the presence of great natural catastrophes; they can but sit and watch for the rain when it is due, and die of famine if it does not come. Drought and famine are on too large a scale in India to be healed by mere private enterprise. "Agriculture in India," says Mr. Markham, "is susceptible of almost indefinite improvement." The natives work only by rule of thumb, and the improvement of existing products equally with the introduction of new ones depends in the first instance entirely on the Government. In the year with which this Statement has to do Lord Mayo created a new department of "Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce," which has charge of all questions relating to land, trade, and statistics. As regards the last subject especially there is an immense amount of work to be done. The survey of only a part of Bengal, carried on under the Court of Directors between the years 1807 and 1813, fills fifty folio volumes of maps and manuscripts, and some record of the kind exists in almost every district. In 1871 Dr. Hunter was appointed Director-General of the new Statistical Survey, and the appendix to his book on Orissa

forms the first part of his labours. The need of correct statistics has been strikingly shown by the results of the Census of 1871. In Bengal, says the Lieutenant-Governor, the Census may almost be said to have revolutionized our ideas as to the amount of the population, as to its distribution over districts, races, and religions, and as to the incidence of taxation. The population of the provinces under the Government of Bengal had been set down in round numbers at forty-two millions. It turned out to be sixty-six millions. Of these nearly a third are Mahometans, and in certain districts the Mahometans are largely in excess of the Hindus. These districts do not include the ancient seats of Mahometan power, for at Dacca, Patna, and Murshidabad there are scarcely any Mahometans. The conclusion drawn from this fact is that the Bengal Mahometans are not descendants of the old conquerors, but of converts who were low-caste Hindus, and who embraced Islam to escape from their ignoble position under the Hindu system. It is a startling reflection that Bengal alone contains more Mahometans than any other country in the world. The taking of the Census was regarded with great suspicion by the lower classes among the natives. The general belief was that it was the forerunner of a new tax, but in some places it was supposed that the inhabitants were to be drafted to the hills, where coolies were wanted; and in Murshidabad a still more rigorous Malthusianism was attributed to the Government in the shape of a report that the authorities intended to blow the surplus population away from guns.

The most important chapter perhaps in the Statement is that which deals with irrigation. A convenient map shows the various degrees in which an artificial supply of water is necessary and important in India. In the North-West there is a region, comprising all Sind and half the Punjab, in which the annual rainfall is less than fifteen inches. Here without irrigation human life cannot be sustained. Surrounding this arid zone there is a Northern dry zone from one to two hundred miles in width, in which the annual rainfall is between fifteen and thirty inches. This district includes Delhi and Agra. A similar zone extends over the interior of the peninsula south of Bombay. In both these cases also irrigation is essential to the existence of the population. The upper part of the valley of the Ganges, Central India, and the East-

ern coast of the Madras Presidency constitute a fourth zone, in which the rainfall is between thirty and sixty inches. Even here great distress is often caused by want of irrigation. The deltas of the Mahánadi and the Ganges, together with a strip of land along the northern side of the Ganges valley, have a rainfall of from sixty to seventy-five inches. Here irrigation becomes a luxury, often useful, but never necessary. On the West coast of the peninsula and on the East coast of the Bay of Bengal come two zones of excessive rainfall where irrigation finds no place. Mr. Markham gives a full and interesting account of the steps which the Government of India has been taking for many years past to meet these several needs. In 1864 it was decided that the State should undertake the irrigation works instead of entrusting them to private Companies with guaranteed interest. In 1867 an Inspector-General of Irrigation was appointed, with Irrigation Secretaries in each Presidency. Every year a sum is assigned for irrigation works from the ordinary revenues of the year, which is not to be transferred to any other class of works. When this sum is spent additional works may be executed by loans. The Irrigation Department has also under its charge the vast system of embankments which in the zones of excessive rainfall are required to protect the country from disastrous inundations.

The connection usually supposed to exist between the need for irrigation and the preservation of forests is doubted by Dr. Brandis and other officers of experience. But even if the absolute rainfall is not diminished by the denudation of the country, forests are of great indirect importance to the success of irrigation schemes. Where the mountains are bare, the surface drainage is extremely rapid, the irrigating rivers are flooded in the wet season, and deprived of part of their supply during the dry season. Where the forests are preserved, the surface drainage is gradual, the springs remain longer full, and the need for husbanding water becomes at the same time both less urgent and more easily supplied. Besides this, timber is in great and increasing demand for fuel, for building, and for use on railways. Rich as India naturally is in forests, the Government has great difficulties to contend with in preserving them. In the unreserved forests, which are under the management of local officers, the people possess or exercise rights of pasturage, of burning, and

of desultory and exhausting cultivation, which annually cause great destruction of timber. Jungle fires are constantly lighted either to clear a space for cultivation or for the sake of the fresh grass which springs up afterwards. In the patches thus cleared a crop is raised for a single year without the aid either of the plough or the spade. In the following year the field is abandoned and another patch of forest burnt down. A more costly mode of agriculture cannot be imagined. To gain a single crop millions of seedling trees are destroyed, while for a considerable distance round the bark of the trees is scorched, the wood exposed to the air, and the timber rendered hollow and useless. As yet forest legislation is extremely imperfect. By an Act passed in 1865 the local Governments are empowered to prohibit the destruction of trees, but the Act does not extend to Madras and Bombay, and has not been largely applied even in Bengal. Existing forest rights and the difficulty of exercising effective supervision in the more remote districts present serious obstacles to any real improvement in this direction. Besides the plantations made for the supply of timber, large tracts of ground are now set apart in the hills for the growth of the cinchona plant. On the Nilgiri hills there are now more than two million and a half of plants, and it is found that the bark of the cultivated tree is very much richer in quinine than the bark of the wild tree. Large quantities are now exported, while in India itself the Government is doing its best to bring quinine within the reach of all classes. This is the more important since the progress of irrigation, necessary as it is to the support of the population, in many districts is found to increase the prevalence of fever.

As regards the administration of justice, the most notable feature is the number of civil suits. In Oudh they have doubled in four years; in the North-Western Provinces the number during the year 1871-72 was the highest since the mutiny. This is held to be a sign of great indebtedness and poverty. The suits "are generally for money on written promises to pay, and on very small sums. . . . The principal is never paid off, but the interest is mercilessly exacted, and the people become slaves to the money-lenders." Sir George Campbell is disposed to think that the "tendency to uphold doctrines of bare law, and the literal enforcement of contracts alleged to have been entered into by ignorant and

improvident people," operate very harshly against the poor. In England the same evil existed before the institution of County Courts, and it eminently deserves consideration whether some similar relief could not be applied in India. Sir George Campbell is also opposed to the present multiplication of appeals, as giving immense advantage to the rich, and promoting a litigious temper among a race which has no need of external stimulus in that direction. The criminal interest of the year chiefly attaches to the North-West Provinces, where the police are engaged in putting down hereditary thieving and preventing infanticide. There are twenty-nine tribes who support themselves during part of the year by systematic plunder, the gains being divided according to a fixed rule. By an Act passed in 1871 the Government is empowered to remove a criminal tribe into a reformatory settlement, where the members are provided with land at low rates, and encouraged to live an honest life. At the same time they are subjected to rigorous police supervision, and arrested if found beyond the limits of the settlement. Infanticide is being attacked by accurate registration of births and by frequent inspection of female infants. Any village in which the number of girls is less than 40 per cent. that of the whole number of children is proclaimed, and in the proclaimed villages the police supervision is exceptionally rigorous. The cost of the extra police required is paid by a small tax on each house. The number of girls surviving infancy is already decidedly on the increase.

From Once a Week.

A PIECE OF SPONGE.

THERE is a regular fishing season for sponge in the Mediterranean, and at one time it used nearly all to go to Smyrna, and be sold as Turkey sponge; but now, when the rocks of Syria and the Grecian Isles have been well dredged, and the collected sponge is dried, it is shipped off at once for the European markets. We know principally by sight two kinds of sponge—the fine, close, elastic; and the dark, open sponge, familiar to us as "honeycomb." To the uninitiated it would seem that these were the produce of different countries; but it is not so, for the two qualities are found growing together, side by side, upon the same

rock, and are dredged with the same net. The fishing season lasts for about four months, and is carried on in a rough, primitive fashion, but with tolerably satisfactory results, though the thick, coarse, honeycomb sponge is far inferior in commercial value to its close-grained, firm brother, the Turkey sponge par excellence. Probably for want of research, the supply of sponge is almost confined to the Mediterranean and the West Indies. Florida and the neighbourhood of the Bahamas form the sponge hunter's ground, and it is probably the case that the turtle may make his resting-place amongst the jelly-like grove of the sponge. We get very little of the West Indian sponge, though, for it is principally disposed of in the American markets, excepting such portions as are too poor, rough, and inferior for the trade; and that is shipped here, to be bought up by the Jewish merchants, who have the monopoly of this branch of commerce here in England. To see the late contents of a case of sponge after being moistened, one is tempted into comparisons with the Genii of the Arabian Nights who escaped from the vessel that bore Solomon's seal—inasmuch as the dry sponge is close, compact, and tightly packed in; while the application of water swells it out to a large bulk several times the original. We have pretty good samples of this in the well-puffed-out pieces offered for sale by street vendors; and, by the way, strange stories of these pieces of sponge are told, as to their being refuse cleaned up for sale—tales that have very little foundation in fact, for the pieces are for the most part new. We are so much accustomed to look upon sponge as a foreign

production, that we forget that it is plentiful upon our own shores. The pieces found are certainly small, but none the less they are sponge—and some of them of very fine texture, though utterly worthless for economical purposes. There are few places of seaside resort where tiny pieces may not be picked up mingled with scraps of dried sea-weed and broken shells. Those who are fortunate enough to find the peculiarly shaped growth known as Neptune's glove will have something well worthy of a place in the private museum of curiosities, good, bad, and indifferent. The collection of sponge in the Levant is dignified by the title of fishing, and partakes very much of the nature of the process practised to obtain pearls; inasmuch as divers go down in some eight or ten fathoms water, taking with them a triangular-shaped piece of stone, to conquer the buoyancy. A rope is attached to this stone, and held by companions in the boat. Once down, the diver's object is to wade rapidly to the pieces of rock bearing the growing sponge; this he rapidly tears off, till he has as much as he can conveniently carry, or till his power of remaining below is exhausted, when he pulls his rope, and is rapidly hauled up into the boat. In some parts of the East, though, the diving is not practised; but the sponges are collected from shallower water, by means of a fork at the end of a long pole. In this way the pieces are forced or dragged from the rock, but very often at the expense of the sponge, which is thus made ragged and unsalable. A similar process is followed out in the West Indies, a long fork being used in place of the diving,

A BITTER principle has been separated from white hellebore root by H. Weppen, and described by him under the name of Veratramarin. He has also prepared from the same source a new acid, called Jervic acid, and has studied a number of its salts.

ected in this way. Among his conclusions we note that he finds, in the Black Forest, that this affection is confined to granite soils, to the junction of granite and gneiss, and to Bunter sandstone.

It has been observed, in some localities, that the bones of horned cattle, fed on certain kinds of fodder, exhibit an unusual degree of brittleness. The subject has been lately investigated by Herr Nessler, who has analyzed the fodder and water consumed by cattle af-

SIXTY curious statuettes in terra-cotta have just been placed in the Louvre, brought from Tanara, in Bœotia, by MM. Dumont and Chaplain, as part of the fruits of their late voyage of artistic discovery in Greece. They vary in height from 2 1-2 inches to 10 inches, and all represent women or children.